

Ace

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN OF DISTINCTION

OCTOBER
FIFTY CENTS
No. 8

**DESERT
ISLAND
PLAYMATES—
In Color**



**Alex in Wonderland:
TV'S NEWEST SHOCKWAVE**

WHY U. N. RAPS U.S. ON VICE GIRLS • HANDBOOK FOR PRACTICAL JOKERS

HELLO!



Ace

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN OF DISTINCTION

OCT., 1959
VOL. 3, NO. 3

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Ace-High

BY SAM BREWER

BOOKS AND RECORDS

TRAVELLING ON WITH THE WEAVERS (Vanguard) is another of the delightfully unique listening experiences that only The Weavers can offer. They are more than just singers of folk songs; they give new personality and life to many an old favorite, and have even catapulted hoary old ballads into high popularity. What disc jockeys have come to call 'the Weavers sound' is indescribable; it has to be heard to be appreciated. Many of the songs in this latest album have been rearranged to capture their quality, and have come out the better for it.

THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER (Riverride) is an all-star jazz session under the leadership of Cannonball Adderley, with Milt Jackson heading a notable agglomeration of blues specialists. Wynton Kelly is at the piano, Percy Heath plays bass, and Art Blakey does the drumming. When good men like this get together, the result is bound to be spectacular listening—and it is.

CLET BAKER INTRODUCES JOHNNY

PACE (Riverride) to what promises to be a distinguished career. Clet Baker, one of the top trumpeters of the jazz world, needs no introduction; it need only be said that he appears here with his quintet. The young singer he has chosen to support is a rarity in the jazz field, Johnny sings without a single gimmick, carrying every note of the melody, yet with a very warm, springy rhythm.

CRAZY HE CALLS ME (Capitol) is vibrant Dakota Staton at her best in a showcase series of songs designed

to display her talent at full range. And what a range it is: belting, whispering, tender, dynamic. In this album, it takes three different orchestras, those of Nelson Riddle, Sid Feller, and Howard Biggs, to match her wide-ranging moods in love lyrics.

MARIA GOLOVIN (RCA-Victor) presents Gian-Carlo Menotti's un-

ashamedly lyric, romantic opera in a brilliantly theatrical performance. Menotti, supposedly one of our most modern composers, has never truly broken away from the zoning, sweeping, dramatic concept of the singing theatre that is opera — and a good thing, too. His three-act drama is rich in melody, in luminous flashes of humor, underlining the basically dramatic story. MARIA GOLOVIN is a perfect blending of music and drama, all sung in clear and understandable English by an expert cast.

MARY ASTOR — MY STORY (Double-day) is a fascinating self-portrait of a courageous woman who also happens to be a famous actress. The story is undoubtedly

written by herself, without the assistance of a literary ghost, only she could have gotten so deeply under the surface revealing without compromise or glossing-over the sometimes shocking, always deeply human, details of her life. Even more fascinating than the famous diaries is the story of her triumph over her innate weaknesses and failings. Without wallowing in self-pity, Mary Astor appeals deeply to the emotional sympathies of the reader. A book well worth reading and re-reading. ●



FICTION



The Rebels' Last

The gringo thought it was a grand trick when he made love to the dictator's lady. But the way

BY VIC KAMBER

AN ANACHRONISTIC idealism had lifted Tom Baxter from the soil of his native Vermont and plunked him down in the middle of a Central American revolution. The fact that people had faith in his absolute integrity had in time elevated him to the role of leader of the rebels. All the rival parties which comprised the rebellion had agreed that the prize was the one man among them who could be trusted by all. And the downtrodden people hailed him as El Libertador, the Norte Americano who would remove the dictator's heel which was grinding them into the mud.

This mud was a physical reality in the pinpoint banana republic, the result of sudden, explosive cascades of rain which drenched the land. The sheets of water were pouring down as Tom sat well under the awning of a sidewalk cafe in a small village and waited for Clark Braintree.

Clark was the only other Yankee besides Tom who was fighting on the side of the rebels. There was a closeness between him and Tom. Yet they were as different as any two men could be.

In appearance Clark was tall, dark and raper-slender, while Tom had the stolidity of stockiness, well-muscled but built close to the ground, pale-complected and sandy-haired. In character, Clark was as grasping as Tom was honest, as daring as Tom was sensible and as anxious for self-gratification in all its worldly forms as Tom was single-minded in his devotion to the cause of the peasants. Clark was a soldier-of-fortune in the truest sense and his reasons for joining the revolution were purely mercenary.

Now, eyes Continued p. 65

Revel

it turned out, the joke was on him.



BOW JEST

If westerns give you the TV-jeebies, dial Pat O'Connell, the best reason we know for giving video back to the Indians



WHEN YOU TURN ON your TV set, do you automatically slap leather and leap for your horse? Do you flinch at hot video lead and dig your spurs into the ottoman? Have television westerns got you heating your toddlers with a branding iron and pouring the cat's milk into a horse trough? In other words, are you up to here with the "Wagon Train" that never get where it's going, "The Rifleman" who's footloose target shooting at human skeletons, "Wyatt Earp" and his burping bullets—all the razzle-dazzle caters that drawl and gallop and shoot their way across your 21-inch screen? If you are, you are not alone. There are quite a few of us viewers who long for the good old days of test patterns, grunt-'n'-groin exhibitions and a solid hour of Uncle Miltie. We're willing to dial north, south or east for our entertainment, but anything farther west than Philadelphia gives us the haybunter-jeebies. We feel it's time these cowboys—the "Jefferson Drums" and the "Restless Guns," the "Men Without A Gun" and the many with them—were driven from the video range. And the best way to fight cowboys is with Indians. However, so well entrenched are these burkes that no ordinary Indian can match them in a showdown—not even "Broken Arrow." But we've come up with a format—bow-and-arrow and lush Pat O'Connell—which should make the roughest, toughest gunslinger throw up his gun. Here's a show that has everything any male viewer could ask and there's nary a gun in it. Pat's rating will make "Maverick" take to cover and when she strings her bow, it may well start a movement to give "Cheyenne" and the rest of the west back to the Indians. There's no sponsor problem, either. Pat's a brave that can sell anything.





TV's Newest Shockwave:

Alex in Wonderland

Alexander King has one foot in the groove, the other aimed at society's rump. Determined to die laughing, in the process he's bringing new life to video!

"DON'T WRITE or print anything about me!" thundered a vibrant voice over the phone. Sounding like Ronald Colman with a Viennese accent, TV's newest celebrity let forth a volley of invective that might have made a sailor blush.

"I don't want to be squeezed between all that ectoplasm!" he blurted.

Obviously Alexander King is shy of being smothered by all the loveless in ACE, but his story is too good to be left on the shelf. Here is a man, almost sixty years old, who has enchanted the world and amazed the medical specialists who pronounced him as good as dead two years ago.

Because of a diseased and pain-racked kidney, no doctor believed King could survive more than a month before uremic shock would put him away for keeps. They said his only chance — and a very slight one — was to undergo surgery. But medical knifery was not for Alex King. His distrust of the medical profession, with a very few exceptions, is legend.

"Specialists don't care a hoot in hell about what has broken loose in the adjacent county," explains King. "The ulcer man is busy with his ulcer routine, the eye and ear man will go down as far as the throat, but the kidney man doesn't give a rap what goes on north of the bladder."

If there's a doctor in the house, he may be interested in the history of one who has gone on stubbornly living against the best medical advice. For his casebook, here's the background of the high kidney-less King.

Born in Vienna, young Alex came to New York at the age of fourteen, determined to paint. Since he was not a commercial success at it, he spent the next twenty-five years becoming managing editor of *Sings* magazine, editor-in-chief of *American*, a

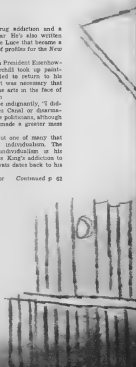
two-time loser in drug addiction and a four-timer at the altar. He's also written plays—one with Claire Luce that became a movie—plus a series of profiles for the *New Yorker*.

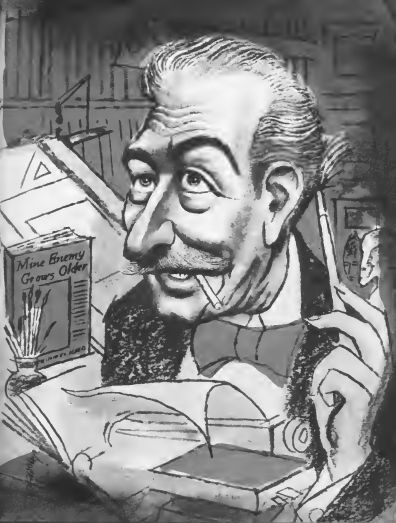
Recently, when both President Eisenhower and Winston Churchill took up painting, King felt impelled to return to his palette. He decided it was necessary that artists hold fast to the arts in the face of encroaching statemen.

"After all," he wrote indignantly, "I don't butt into the Suez Canal or disarmament. I left that to the politicians, although I could hardly have made a greater mess than they did."

The statement is but one of many that attest King's strong individualism. The trademark of that individualism is his penchant for pink tee. King's addiction to these ray pastel cravets dates back to his youth.

At 19 he worked for *Continued p. 62*





FICTION

BY JOSEPH RICHARDS





THE

IMPERFECT TRIANGLE

"BUT I ALWAYS thought you and Harry had the ideal marriage," said Joanne. Amy bit her lip. "Well, maybe we did once, but things like that change."

The two women were seated across from each other at the kitchen table in Amy's house. They were on their second cup of coffee and third cigarette. Amy was wearing an apron over blouse and slacks, her brown hair in disarray from a morning of housecleaning. With her thumbnail she was nervously picking at what was left of the polish on her nails.

Joanne, as always, was in contrast to Amy. She was dressed stylishly, and sexily, in a simple print dress which hugged every curve of her slim, high-busted figure. Not a curl of her shoulder-length blonde hair was out of place. From the lacquered toenails peeping out of her open-toed shoes to the precisely right touch of rouge on her cheeks, Joanne's grooming served to accent her considerable natural attractiveness.

She was a divorcee, 35 years old. She and Amy and Amy's husband, Harry, had known each other since childhood. As a matter of fact Joanne and Harry had "gone steady" back in high school. The lingering quality of that relationship manifested itself in light banter when they were together. Amy didn't seem to mind it and Harry and Joanne found it nostalgically pleasant.

But Joanne was also Amy's friend and now she displayed concern at her marital difficulties. "Honey, I'm not prying," she said, "but if it would help to tell me about it, then give."

Amy lit another cigarette, jerking the match from side to side irritably to put it out. "To put it simply, Joanne, Harry's become impotent." Continued page 72

Joanne had what it took to solve Harry's problem. She was just what the doctor ordered. But Harry's reaction wasn't what she expected!

BY LOREN S. SPANDLER



WHY U. N. RAPS U. S. ON VICE GIRLS

What's wrong with our laws?
How bad are our police methods?
Why is prostitution increasing?
Here are the startling answers!

WE AMERICANS are the most advanced people on the face of the earth—in every field but one: prostitution.

Don't take our word for it. Take the United Nations' A report recently issued by the U.N. Economic and Social Council, under the imposing title of "The Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others" makes it transparently clear that we're doing everything wrong when it comes to the question of the play-for-pay girls.

Our first big mistake, according to the report, is in calling prostitution a crime and in treating the practitioner as a criminal. Another slap in our direction is directed at the practice of vice squad detectives picking up a woman suspected of being a prostitute, escorting her to her place of business,



watching her undress, giving her money and then arresting her.

Thus, the august U.N. body avers, is not only ineffective; it is unjust.

"The practice used in certain countries," it says, "of entrusting the detection of such offenses to a special police vice squad or to plainclothes police officers cannot be commended."

"Many people doubt even the wisdom or justice of accepting in such cases the evidence presented by the same police officer who has prepared the charge and the courts before whom the cases are brought generally frown on such methods of police espionage and entrapment."

Many Americans concur in this idea. Max Lerner, the outspoken columnist of the *New York Post*, declares that city and state officials should

"combine forces in pushing for the U.N. proposal; namely, that prostitution as a crime should be abolished from our statute books and thinking."

"Our police," he proposes, "should find other and better things to do than to tap call-girl wires and make raids, and we should turn our energies to some of the sources from which the prostitute (full-time and part-time) springs."

Mrs. Anna M. Cross, Commissioner of Correction of New York City, and Chief Magistrate John M. Murphy agree that the "traditional police approach to the problem of prostitution is futile and corrupting."

Another backhanded swipe at the United States is brought into the report by Soviet Russia, which declares that prostitution has ceased to constitute a problem in the

Continued on next page



WHY U.N. RAPS U.S. ON VICE GIRLS continued

U.S.S.R." In its reply to a U.N. questionnaire, the Communists declare that "radical changes took place in the country which included the elimination of unemployment, the intensification of social services, the raising of the level of living and the realization of the full equality of men and women."

"The Government has observed," they continue, "that these changes have eliminated the conditions giving rise to prostitution; namely material insecurity and the lack of legal safeguards for women."

The Russians may have thought that was a pretty clever crack at the capitalist system, but in another section of the report it is shown that all the advances they claim have little or no effect on the question.

"Even in a country with a prosperous economy, a high standard of living, a full equality of men and women and a well advanced program of social service, the problem of prostitution is not solved," according to the U.N.

Maybe the reason prostitution has been eliminated behind the Iron Curtain—if it has been—is that nobody can afford it.

Under healthy economic conditions, the report goes on to say, "the pattern of prostitution has changed but the problem remains; the number of street walkers and of persons who drift into prostitution through economic necessity has decreased appreciably, but the number of call girls who take to prostitution to obtain the luxury they crave has greatly increased."

Or, to put it another way, when times are good, the courtesans move off the streets and into swank apartments, and the prices go up accordingly.

Seemingly accepting the inevitable, does the U.N. Committee then suggest that the answer lies in the regulation and recognition of prostitution, as has been the practice in most countries at one time or another and is still a custom in many lands?

Flatly no. "Governments," the report sternly declares, "should enact legislation for the abolition of any form of the regulation of prostitution, and particularly for the

closing of licensed or tolerated houses."

The report gives many reasons why the regulation of prostitutes doesn't work and has never worked. The argument that it helps control the spread of social diseases is neatly smashed by the statement that "at no time and in no country has the system of regulation ever limited the ravages of venereal disease." On the contrary, it goes on, it has been shown that "by far the largest number of venereal infections are not at the time due to prostitution."

In other words, whether we have regulated prostitution or not, we will have venereal diseases.

The stand of the Committee is against both the regulation of prostitution and prostitution itself. It calls for the eventual complete abolition of the world's oldest profession, not by law, but by social progress.

"The most effective way to eradicate a social scourge," the U.N. Committee report avers, "is to remove its cause. It adds that women become prostitutes through inclination, need or persuasion. But the final decision . . . is determined by their mentality and the circumstances of their environment."

"Prostitutes have generally slight mental or physical abnormalities (irritability, abnormal lack of emotion, excitability, pronounced nervousness) and a great number of them suffer from psychosexual immaturity. The number of prostitutes who are psychologically and emotionally normal appears to be very limited. On the other hand, the number who are actually 'feeble-minded' is relatively low."

In other words, the average prostitute is more inclined to be nuts than most women, but she isn't so daffy that she can't enjoy her work.

The cure, obviously, is to unleash a horde of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers upon the girl who has fallen, so to speak, into the easy-money sex racket. This might prove specially beneficial to the younger prostitutes, who are drifting into that line of business in large numbers.

"Most prostitutes," the report observes, "start their calling at an ear-

ly age, and there is evidence in recent years of increasing prostitution among girls of 15 or younger."

Also pointed out is a definite connection between prostitution and the twin evils of alcoholism and narcotic addiction. In Sweden, the report notes, there was an alarming simultaneous rise in both juvenile prostitution and the traffic in drugs and narcotics. This imposes "a great danger to young people; tablets of various kinds change hands at cafes, dance halls and in open streets. Over-indulgence in alcohol has also increased in all categories of homes, especially among young women, a highly demoralizing factor being the use of alcohol in connection with narcotics."

Likewise, in the United States, "approximately 50% of the prostitutes are drug addicts." What is particularly alarming, however, is the fact that the number of juvenile addicts has increased significantly in recent years and that there has been a simultaneous rise in venereal disease infections in the age group of 11 to 19.

The involvement of children led the Committee to the source of the problem, the man who patronizes joy-girls. "In recent years more attention has been given to the prostitute's customer and various studies have been conducted with regard to the fundamental causes of the sexual behavior of the male who satisfies his sexual desires with prostitutes."

Kinsey pointed out, and the report quotes him, that "men go to prostitutes because they have insufficient sexual outlets in other directions, or because prostitution provides types of activity not readily available elsewhere . . . because of a physical deformity . . . because they can pay for sexual relations and forget other responsibilities, or because it is cheaper to have intercourse with prostitutes than court a girl for a long period."

After citing statistics to the effect that 82% of the male population of the United States ultimately has some experience with prostitutes, the U.N. report comments on the reasons underlying the high percentage.

Continued p. 10



When the lights dim and the first semi-draped beauty floats across the stage at Las Vegas, Dunes Hotel, the staunchest gamblers desert the gaming tables—and here's why!

The Show That Stops Roulette





ONCE, not so long ago, a fellow trekking across the Nevada Desert could get mighty thirsty before he found a water-hole. Then some old prospector stumbled on a trickling oasis and the place became a stopover for travelers. Pretty soon somebody threw up a general store and somebody else supplied a little alcoholic flavor for the H₂O and a town began growing up around the water-hole. A few decades went by and an ambitious fellow put up a hotel. A few more passed and a real smart operator installed a roulette wheel in the lounge of the hostelry. And Las Vegas as we know it today dates from the moment that first wheel began to spin. It's the symbol of the tourist paradise, and its sister wheels—particularly the one at the plush Dunes Hotel—pole up the greenbacks that make the one-time oasis the prime attraction in the U.S.A. The tycoons who run Vegas shudder to think what might happen if the roulette wheel ever braked to a halt. Yet that's just what happened recently at the Dunes and—to their gratification—it proved more of a boon to the establishment than a catastrophe. The reason the grooved disc was stopped in mid-revolution was that there were no players plunking down their shekels on its tall-bouncing whorl. And the reason the players had deserted the wheel was the spectacular show the Dunes was offering in its fabulous night club. Headlining Tempest Storm, the Jewish produc-





tion featured the most beautiful girls selected from all over the country in gals song-and-dance numbers comparable only to the Ziegfeld Follies of old. And as in the Ziegfeld extravaganza, the Dunes lovelies were hampered by little in the way of garb. Their appeal being universal, the female guests as well as the male deserted the gaming room to view the fabulous spectacle. At first the proprietors found the stilled dice cubes and undrunk cards depressing, but later—after word had spread of the wondrous performance and attracted scores of additional guests—they looked forward to the nightly pause in roulette and other games of chance as the best publicity break they ever had. And they found that once the last shapely chorine had retreated behind the final curtain, the gambling-minded flocked back to the roulette wheel in far greater numbers than before. The excitement of the show carried over to the excitement of the games of chance and, oh, how the money flowed—and is still flowing—into the till. It isn't just the additional take that gladdens the hearts of the men who run the Dunes, though. The money is nice of course, but what really gives them a glow is the knowledge that they've produced one of the sprightliest shows to grace Vegas—or any place else—in many a year. It's something to be proud of, all right—putting on the fabulous show that stops roulette in the city where the wheel is king. ●



RETURN TO PASSION



Based on professional models.

When a man's far from home, who's to say how he should greet temptation?
When his passionate wife's all alone, who's to say how she should cope with desire?
When they face their guilty secrets, who's to judge them but themselves?

THE passengers crowded against the starboard rail as the liner slowly glided into New York Harbor. They oohed and aahed at the beauty of the skyline. Their voices grew husky as they pointed out the Statue of Liberty to one another. They strained their eyes to pick out familiar faces in the crowd on the dock.

Norman Dalton felt the press of the people behind him as they pushed and shoved to try to see around his broad shoulders and over the top of his head, which was six feet, two inches above the dock. He stood composedly, a deeply suntanned, even-featured, lithe-muscled, out-of-doors young man. But inwardly he wasn't calm at all. Excitement was racing through his veins at the thought of seeing Susan again.

Three years was too long to be away from a wife as pink and white and deliciously curved as Susan. Three years in Egypt, Turkey, Crete, Iran, interesting years, adventurous years, but too long. Much too long, even for an archeologist.

Not that Norman Dalton was most people's conception of a typical archeologist. He wasn't near-sighted and professorial and stodgy. He wasn't shrewd-minded and monotone-voiced and pedantic. He wasn't wrapped up in yesterday's civilizations to the exclusion of the pleasures found in the present. He was as an alert, healthy young man of 28 years with normal appetites. And, oh, it would be good to feel his arms around Susan again!

His reserve was interrupted by a set of long-nailed, unmistakably feminine fingers running up the back of his neck and entangling themselves in his curly, jet-black hair.

"Hi, Ruthie," he said without turning around.

The young woman attached to the fingers was everything that is meant by the word "alluring." She was slim, long-legged, full-breasted and had shiny Auburn hair, long-lashed, unsmiling eyes and the most, peeling mouth of a Circe. The way she dressed, the way she carried herself, everything about her was chic.

"Hi, Norman," she answered.

"We'll be alongside in another

half-hour," Norman said, indicating the dock.

"And then goodbye," she said lightly.

"And then goodbye."

"No complications," he repeated firmly.

"C'est la vie." She smiled a little sadly.

"C'est la vie."

Then they were silent as the crowd pressed around.

That, Norman was thinking, was the trouble with Ruth. She felt duty-bound to play every scene to the dramatic hilt. They'd had their ship-board fling—some ten days of it—and she had to build it up into some all-consuming passion and then knock herself out playing the "Til-be-brave-I-won't-make-a-dust" part. She was old enough—and certainly experienced enough—to know better.

Still, he mused, it had been fun, an amatory adventure he wouldn't have missed for the world. Those times when the two of them had huddled together in her stateroom—or his—giggling like children at the thought of her husband earnestly playing bridge two decks above them. My, he thought wryly, that man had certainly liked his bridge.

He supposed he should have felt guilty about cuckolding him, but his conscience about such things seemed to have vanished over the past three years. During that time he'd found, somewhat to his surprise, that women were necessary to him. He'd determined, after a bit of trial and error, that married women were by far the most practical with which to dally. They were more experienced and therefore more enjoyable. They made less demands on his time and, since they rarely wanted to be seen in public with him, put less of a strain on his purse. They were more apt to take things casually, to accept the end of an affair philosophically, than their single sisters.

Of course, there were drawbacks to a romance with another man's wife. There was always the chance of being caught by an irate husband. There was the threat of violence hovering in the background. There were

sometimes guilt feelings on the part of the woman, feelings which she might insist he share.

On the whole, though, he had lived a full, varied and well-oriented sex life for the past three years. He had sampled the charms of women in many of the countries of the near-East. He remembered his paramours fondly.

There had been the Countess Gretchen in Istanbul, plump and flaxen-haired and knowing in the ways of love. There had been Maria, the wife of a diamond merchant in Cairo, a wry, intense Eurasian girl who was almost too passionate. There had been Shasha, a veiled Arabian with skin like velvet who had sent him scurrying under the bed night after night with the warning that she heeded the footsteps of her husband. The husband never came, but ever after, no matter who the woman, Norman had found himself listening for footsteps at the damndest, most inconvenient times.

There had been others too, but all that was over now. Soon he would be holding Susan in his arms and, despite his casual infidelities, Susan was the only woman for him. She was a good girl, pure and sweet and loyal. She was an innocent girl, a one-man girl and he was exceedingly lucky to be that man.

He was lucky because beneath the sweetness, the purity, the innocence, burned a lurid fire far from alone. He had kindled that fire but a few times before he'd gone abroad. Their honeymoon had been cut short by the demands of the institution which endowed the expedition of which Norman had been a member. And, he reflected, he'd been too young, too callow, too unseasoned to make the most of Susan's passion in those days. But, he'd learned during the past three years and he'd apply that knowledge. He knew instinctively that it would be like it had been with no other woman.

His peering eyes probed the dock in anticipation. And suddenly, there she was! There was Susan, standing on tiptoe, wearing something light and summery and all-American girlish, yet. Continued on next page

RETURN TO PASSION *continued*

subtly sexy. She'd seen him too and was waving a handkerchief. Her long, golden hair was rapping in the wind and her body was taut with excitement. He sighed happily. She was so young, so pure, so desirable. And she was all his.

On the dock, Susan's excitement and yearning matched his own. At last Norman, her Norman, had come back to her. At last the lover and husband who'd loosed the forces of passion within her had come back. Once again she'd know the meaning of being with Norman.

She too had her memories of the all too brief time they'd spent together. It had been a time of awakening for her. She'd never known sex was like that, never known a man could elicit such responses as Norman had. Yet, she knew now, that Norman had had his rough spots. In reality, he'd been an inexperienced lover, rousing, but rough around the edges.

Well, she'd smooth out those edges. It would be fun turning his youthful lovmaking into the full-bodied, knowing sexuality of a mature man. She knew the potential was there. She knew their early marital relations had been but a promise of better things to come. She knew it now, even if she hadn't been aware of it at the time.

She remembered how heartbroken she'd felt when he'd had to leave so abruptly, just when they were really discovering each other. She remembered how three years without Norman, three years without the fulfillment of the desire he'd aroused, had stretched before her like an eternity. Now, she'd asked herself then, would she be able to survive without the sex life he'd initiated?

But, she'd found an answer. She'd found it first with Tom, a friend of Norman's who'd set out to see that she didn't grieve his absence too acutely—and seduced her in the process. She'd owed with remorse all the next day, but Tom had come around to assuage her guilt that evening and his savvy had dried her tears.

She'd soon grown tired of that savvy though, and the sameness of Tom's technique bored her. With vows to turn over a new leaf, she sent him packing. But, under the leaf,

she'd found yet another lover, Jerry.

Jerry was a music-boy, narcissistic to an extreme and his very preoccupation with self-satisfaction had given Susan's affair with him a monochromatic kind of flip that was something new in her experience. But she was far too normal to enjoy that kind of emotion for long. Jerry followed Tom along the road leading beyond the perimeter of her life.

Arnold had been next and really the first of the men who'd taught her how to enjoy sex—excepting Norman, of course. There was only one trouble with Arnold—and it was a failing which also seemed to affect the lovers who followed him. He—and they—were always worrying about her husband coming home unexpectedly.

"What if your husband discovers us?" they'd ask nervously.

"Oh, you don't have to worry about him," she'd merrily reassure them. "My husband's overseas."

"My husband's overseas." How many times had those words passed her lips in the past three years? And now she would never have to say them again. Norman was home. And with her subtle coaching, Norman would be enough man for her forever more.

She rushed forward as he came down the gangplank. Then she was in his arms and her body was on fire for him. All the business of going through customs, of finding a taxicab, of dropping their luggage at a hotel and going out to eat—all those wasted hours she went through in a fog, her mind focused on that moment when they would at last be alone, in their hotel room, united in the embrace of eros.

It was the same for Norman.

At last the moment came, ecstatic, but all too fleeting, a rapturous whisper of the lifetime of lovmaking which lay before them. Then they lay side by side, smoking cigarettes and chattering as though to make up for their three-year separation, and all the time waiting for the renewal of desire.

They had not long to wait and the second time was sweeter and more fulfilling than the first. It was an experience such as neither of them had ever known before.

And Norman thought to himself that his three years of infidelity had already added a tang to his lovmaking with Susan. It was really amazing that she, who was so inexperienced in the realm of sex, should reach such heights with him. Really, he thought, it was a tribute to his prowess and know-how as a lover.

Susan too was pondering the joy which was theirs. After all's been said and done, she reflected, it's really the woman who sets the pitch of passion. Three years of experience with different men had taught her just how and when to scale the pinnacle of ecstasy. And best of all she'd been able to take Norman with her.

Finally, each mutually secure in a feeling of condescension towards the other, they dozed off. It was some hours later that Norman's slumber was disturbed by the sound of footsteps in the corridor outside the room.

Under the best of circumstances, Norman was a slow waker, the kind that walks around in a daze until after he's had his morning coffee and cigarette. And, this wasn't morning. The night outside the window was still black. Also, Norman was exhausted.

In his half-awake state, a familiar panic fluttered in his stomach at the sound of the footsteps. He had not yet oriented himself with his surroundings, or perhaps he might not have spoken. But, speak he did.

He nudged Susan in the ribs with his elbow and in a hoarse whisper said "Wake up! It's your husband!"

Yanked so rudely into a semi-conscious state, Susan's reply was automatic. "It can't be," she purred drowsily. "My husband's overseas."

The footsteps receded down the corridor and suddenly they were both wide-awake. One of them—neither was ever quite sure which—switched on the lamp. Their eyes met in stunned comprehension. Their gazes riveted together, each searching the others eyes, each finding the suspicion confirmed there.

And then they lowered their eyes. One of them switched off the lamp and they went back to sleep. When they awoke, it would be with a new knowledge, a knowledge that idylls, like idylls, often have clay feet. ●



"...Till death do us part!"

Two for the Show

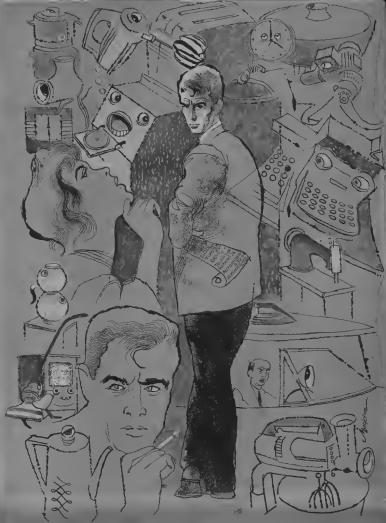
Most people use their lower limbs for support, locomotion, etc., but not so with scrumptious Stephanie Benson. This aureate-tressed lovely believes a gorgeous pair of gems are made for show, and so...



For some net profit, Stephanie dons tight to give viewers added zest. She's a top pinup poser on Coast, also works as a stocking model. How wakers (not the garden variety) all want her legs in their business. Blame them?



THROUGH the years, the emphasis on different areas of a lovely dame's anatomy has shifted north, south, east and west. But these old standbys that made beauties like Betty Grable so popular with GI's are still very much in evidence. We're referring, of course, to a glamorous pair of legs, such as those sported by Stephanie Benson here. A well-turned ankle, a curvy knee, and so forth can win a fella's heart where all else might fail. But he's gotta see 'em first. That's why our blonde and bouncy Benson is a firm believer in showmanship. She feels that if a girl is well-endowed, why not share the wealth? With that end in mind, she decided to become a pinup model. The results can be duly noted (if Duly is in the audience) in the scenes on these pages. Not content to rest on her laurels, Stephanie also shows off her bunsious limbs in the flesh, as a stocking model for leading nylon manufacturers. All this legwork keeps her very busy, as you might imagine, but she still finds time for her favorite sport. What is it? Why, hiking, of course. When it comes to glamor, here's a gal with plenty of leg to stand on. ●



THE PUSHBUTTON PEOPLE EATERS

THE AUTOMATIC clock-radio blasted me out of my dream world "Succulent Mether Paula's Devilish Crusts combine sweetness with satiation." the announcer's voice screamed and the beautiful blonde in my arms was once again just a pillow. I groped for the button which would silence that damnably cheerful voice. I pushed the button. The voice kept yammering.

Desperately, I twisted a knob "A Breakfast of Crunchies, the only cereal shot from a jet turbine, is your assurance of regularity." I snatched another voice. This one had an authoritative medical twang that completely destroyed all hope of sleep.

I pushed the button that was supposed to turn off the clock-radio again "And here's Uncle Ethelbert to tell all you kiddies why Ratsketeers have to drink Vin-Gurgle if they want to grow up fast!" I didn't care if they never grew up. I pushed the "off" button again. No results. Finally, unable to kill the damn thing, I fled to the bathroom.

I soaked my commercial-beet head in cold water. Then, not quite dry, I plugged in my electric razor. One hundred and ten volts of electricity coursed through my body. I picked myself up off the tiled floor and went in to make myself some breakfast.

The juice squeezer squashed the tip of my pinky to an interesting shade of purple pulp. The electric percolator spewed forth an ooze of thick tar into my coffee cup. The pop-up toaster popped up when I wasn't looking and tossed a charcoal-like slice of toast onto the floor.

I dumped breakfast in the garbage pail and went out to my car. I pressed down on the accelerator. The car wouldn't start. I pressed down on it again. It still wouldn't start. I pressed down on it a third time—and smashed halfway through the back wall of the garage.

As, come on now, you're probably saying to yourself. No one *can* could have that much trouble with gadgets.

The hell you say!

I can. And I do. Every day of my life!

I could go on describing the successful war the ogres of our mechanized age have been waging against me for pages and pages. Take the electric blanket that went berserk one cold night and tried to stew my kidneys while I was sleeping. Or consider the toilet that got even with me for flushing it too hard by deluging me with cold. And how about all these candy and soda vending machines and pay telephones that swallow my coins like freeloaders at a cocktail party and never give anything in return?

I used to wonder about my difficulties with things-majigs. But I arrived at two important conclusions and now I wonder no more.

Firstly I realized that I alone was not being singled out as a victim for mechanized mayhem. I learned that other people were also taking a beating from the wheels and cogs which run our world. I even found a few who were as downtrodden by gadgets as I.

The second conclusion I came to was most important—and it's one which most people simply refuse to believe. This is a shame, for it represents the crux of the struggle between men and machines. It is that machines are alive!

They live! They think! They plot! And the master plan behind their malevolent hooks is aimed at taking the world away from us. Frankenstein's monster was a benevolent tot compared to these well-oiled schemers.

If you doubt their reasoning power, let me introduce you to a few Mechanas that I have known personally. Very personally.

The first is a washing machine that shared my kitchen with me for ten years. During that time I found it almost human—say, super-human! When it was first installed, it was attached by a hose to a drain from the sink. This arrangement didn't suit it. At first it merely gurgled and frothed by way of complaint, but finally it took action. It flipped its lid and disgorged oceans of sudsy water onto the linoleum. As I ran to pull its plug out, I skidded across the floor and landed with a spine-jolting thud. Angriily, I kicked the side of the machine.

I never should have done that. For the next ten years it devoted itself to getting even with me. It snapped its agitator at me whenever I was foolish enough to grope into its innards. It deliberately mangled my shirts and tee holes in my socks. And ultimately, in gear-grinding triumph, it destroyed the entire plumbing system of my house.

Of course in doing so, it burned out its motor and also destroyed itself. But suicide is the greatest weapon machines have against us. Their willingness to commit hari-kari is the reason why eventually they will conquer us.

I knew a vacuum cleaner like that once. Self-castration was the theme of its short life; self-destruction its one aim, glutinous its method. Voraciously it would consume buttons and cocktail mixer tops and other indigestible materials. Stubbornly it would force down nails and the cords from lamps and smashed electric light bulbs. In the end (I've no doubt) Continued p. 56

They burn you, shock you and snap their gears at you. And some day,

you can be certain, the gadgets 'll get you if you don't watch out!

BY TED MARK

Siren for

First order of business for a perfect day is a sun session on her patio. Joyous Julia spends the week toiling over a hot typewriter in the offices of a big San Francisco law firm, but Sunday's take-care-of-Casa day.



IF YOU'RE anything like us, those hours between Sunday brunch and the time the evening television shows start are a period reserved for one of life's greatest pleasures, the fine art of relaxation. Now this can take many forms, but the finest way we know of spending that time is with a lovely lass named Julia Case. We're glad to be able to share this pleasure with you, 'cause Julia's kindly invited us to pay a visit to her home in the Belvedere suburb of San Francisco. All week long she acts as chief sten and gal Friday for a trio of young legal whus in the city, and Saturday's usually caught up with dating one or two of her many admirers. But Sunday is set aside for the simpler joys of living.

The Sunday papers read and the brunch dishes washed and dried, Julia always tries to get in a few hours of fun in the sun on her patio. With that traffic-stopping Case shape, you'd naturally expect the male neighbors to take a more than routine interest in her sunbathing. A quick check of local stores, in fact, shows that sales of binoculars and telescopes have taken a sharp rise ever since Julia moved in. Can't say that we blame the guys, either. We brought our camera along and recorded the scene for posterity. Julia's not new to the posing game, though. She's much in demand with foreign, but likes her legal work and hasn't much time for camera sessions. When they come, the results are pictures of rare beauty.

Julia has a roommate, name of Tadzio. He's a Maltese poodle, an old fella of six months. After the sun soaking session, she attends to the gentleman's grooming, and the Case charm is so much in evidence that

Continued p. 32

a Sunday Afternoon

Sunday is traditionally known as a time for rest and relaxation, a respite from the cares and travail of the week. And what better way to pass a delightful afternoon than with captivating Julie Case? Join us now as we pay a social call on this curvy charmer, who makes every Sunday a guaranteed fun-day.





Her pet Maltese poodle, Tadzio gets his weekly bath. Julie named the pooch after a character in the story "Death in Venice" by her favorite writer, Thomas Mann.

you'll hear nary a whinger from the lucky canine as he's dunked and dried. Oh, it's a dog's life, sure enough.

Now comes the part of the afternoon that Julie likes best. She hops into her red Thunderbird and zips over to nearby Golden Gate Beach, to catch the remaining rays of Ol' Sol and frolic in the clear blue Pacific surf. The swimming isn't so hard to get, but trying to acquire a tan while a bunch of beauty-loving beachcombers hover over your blanket can be mighty exasperating. If there's time, Julie tries to get in some water skiing, which is fast becoming her favorite sport. And you'll always find her portable radio tuned to the Giant game of the day, too.

Back home again, with only a few minutes left of a lovely Sunday afternoon, our curvaceous Miss Case turns to her library for company. She's an avid reader, and digests everything from James Joyce to Agatha Christie in the back of her mind, scheduled for some distant day when the affairs of business and pleasure are not so pressing, is a plan for a novel of her own, something along the lines of John Dos Passos' "U.S.A." trilogy, with the leading character a career gal not unlike herself.

You can't spend any time at all with Julie Case without realizing that here is a girl of rare qualities. And Sunday is a fine time to sit back and reflect on her many attractions. We're sure you'll agree, now, as to why we picked her for our cover.





The end of a perfect afternoon comes with a trip to nearby Golden Gate Beach for a quick dip and some more sunning of that fabulous Case chassis. The magic numbers are 37-23-36.



DOUBLE STANDARD

BY GUY LOUIS

When his usual technique got him nowhere, he tried out the ethereal approach. How could he know she'd change the rules?



SHE WAS a summer-stock actress. I was a writer on the local newspaper. I sent a note backstage at the end of the show saying I'd like to meet her.

She came out twenty minutes later, wearing blue jeans, her flaming red hair pulled back in a pony tail. "Hi. Like the show?"

I nodded. The show wasn't the only thing I'd liked. "Can I buy you a drink?"

"I'll have to change my clothes."

"Okay."

She disappeared into the broken-down hotel across from the theatre, and I waited another twenty minutes. It was worth it.

She came towards me, wearing a light green cotton dress, her well-rounded thighs and breasts moving softly, sensuously beneath it. Her hair reached her shoulders, a copper frame for white skin and green eyes.

"Hi again." She smiled.

We got into my car; a '56 Chevy convertible.

"Hot night," I commented, for lack of a more constructive approach.

She smiled, resting her head lazily against the back of the seat.

"I don't care. The heat keeps reminding me that it's summer."

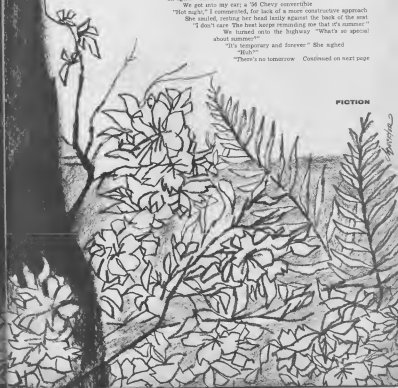
We turned onto the highway. "What's so special about summer?"

"It's temporary and forever." She sighed.

"Huh?"

"There's no tomorrow." Continued on next page

FICTION



DOUBLE STANDARD *continued*

The green and the heat and all the beautiful things that are a part of summer die with summer. Then it's gone, and the feeling's never the same next time. Do you know what I mean?"

"Nope. To me, the end of summer means I'm three months older and I gotta get out the snow tires."

She laughed. "You're not very romantic."

I grinned. "How would you know?"

She swooled around on her left hip, leaning her elbow over the back of the seat. "Maybe I should have said poetic."

"I'm poetic—"

"Little Wilts, fond of pore."

"Neiled his sister to the door—"

She slumped back into her former position. "Forget I said anything. Got a cigarette?"

"Sure." I handed her one, pulling into the parking space outside the Laredo, a local roadhouse frequented by the poor-in-pocket.

She glanced at the red neon sign. "I should have worn my jeans."

I shrugged my shoulders. "That's what you get for dating a low class, underpaid newspaper hack."

She laughed and climbed out of the car. "I thought writers were artists—proud of their work."

"Not this writer."

We found a table near the back and sat down. I slouched into a comfortable position. "What'll you have?"

"Scotch and soda."

I ordered a beer for myself. "Tell me about your career."

She did. Standard stuff. A few TV bits, one small part in a Broadway show that closed after seven performances and half a dozen breaks she'd almost gotten. Her voice was like honey—thick and sweet.

We started back to the hotel at twelve. I'd just about decided not to make a pass—yet—when she moved closer to me on the car seat. Her line of patter stayed the same, but those lazy green eyes met mine with a challenge.

One advantage of summer stock in Small Town U.S.A. is that there is usually a woods near the theatre. This theatre was no exception.

I pulled off the main drag, and parked under a tall, romantic-type tree. She stretched, her body straining its green cotton covering.

I moved closer, taking her in my arms. Her lips were warm and soft—the kind I used to dream about when I was overseas.

My hands moved up her back, searching for the zipper I found it and yanked. She broke away, slamming her hand against my face, but it was too late. The dress fell over her shoulders, revealing a transparent black bra. Fortunately, she couldn't go on fighting me and hold the dress up at the same time. Unfortunately, the dress won.

"You animal," she cried. "You have no sensitivity, no appreciation of the ethereal aspects of love!"

"Eh?"

"Here we are, surrounded by the wonders of summer and nature, and all you think about is sex! Take me back to the hotel!"

I did. She stomped in without even saying good night.

I tried to see her every night for the rest of that week. No luck. I wrote the most magnificent summer theatre review the town had ever seen and sent her a copy. Still no luck.

Then I decided on a new approach. Ethereal love—my new slogan. I spent three hours in the library and came out of it with one quote: "If thou can't lose me, then love my love for thee." I sent it to her with half a dozen roses.

It worked. She condescended to see me.

I took her out. She spent most of the night talking about all kinds of abstract values which, frankly, I just didn't dig. I nodded agreeably, and maintained a solemn, deep expression.

I turned off the road at the same spot, playing it by ear this time.

"When we're out here under the stars like this," I began, wondering what the hell I was talking about, "I feel a real rapport."

"Oh, yes," she answered fervently.

I let my arm encircle her shoulders and she struggled close and enlarged on what I'd said, dredging up all sorts of deep meanings I hadn't

known were there. She became excited as she talked and when she paused for breath, I kissed her.

She leaned back and then kept talking, but with a certain excitement. I guessed that her talk was a sex stimulus to her and tested the theory. When she didn't object, my hands began caressing her body in earnest.

Congratulating myself, I began fumbling at the buttons of her blouse. That brought her up short. She pushed me away. I stopped trying immediately and babbled some nonsense to cover up. I thought she almost looked a little disappointed.

That night set the pattern for the ones which followed. Under the stimulus of intellectual chatter, she'd let me go so far—but no further. Before I knew it, it was the night of her last performance, her last night in town. It was then or never.

I poked her up in the lobby after the show. The audience was swarming around the theatre.

"I'm not going out with you tonight," she announced. "I have another date."

I was startled. "What's the matter? Aren't I ethereal enough for you?"

"That's the trouble," she said. "Some sensitivity is nice, but a girl expects a man to act like a man."

"Huh?"

"She likes to think she's irresistible—that a man can't stop."

"But you stopped me—"

"I wanted to be sure you respected me enough to stop."

"What the hell—?" But I was talking to her back. She was already making her way through the crowd. I stood there stunned, telling myself that all women were nuts. When my eyes refocused, they were aimed at a blonde standing nearby. She was all curves and theatrical appeal.

"Only a real person with real values can function in the theatre," she was saying to somebody.

I recognized her as the ingénue of the play starting the next night. I moved closer, fascinated by the rapid rise and fall of her blouse as she talked. Somewhere, in the back of my head, a small voice was whispering, here we go again. ●

STATUESQUE

If you don't think statues come to life, you can be proved wrong—and here's the story to do it!



There are those that insist it's glamor model Jean Bradley chucking the stony old gentlemen under the chin, but the fellow who really knows claims she's actually a statue of an ancient Greek goddess of love come to eye-flicking life.





WELL SER, I'm on'y the watchman heresabouts, an' nobody sets much store by what I'm a sayin', but if you be wantin' to lend an ear, I'll tell you a tale the likes o' which you never did hear. Jus' pass the bottle, son, an' I'll get on with it. Ahh! 'Twas on just such a night as this an' I'm a-settin' in the warehouse with all the dummies—all the nekkid bodies without heads and heads without bodies and it's peaceful and quiet, just like it is now. Well sir, I make my rounds like always and I come up to this room where the new statue we just got is supposed to be—a genuine old Greek figure, full-size of a woman, a real beautiful woman—and I'll be bornswoggled if the dang thing ain't gone. I looked all about, but that priceless piece o' art is gone. Jus' another tree ring there, hey? Thanks. Well, I was just gettin' set to turn on an alarm, when I spy somethin' movin' a-hand one o' them sleeve curtains. I think sure it's thieves, but I ain't a-feared I pull out of Betty here an' push aside that curtain bold as you like. Another? Don't run' if I do. 'Scuse me. 'At's what comes o' eatin' at that one-arm joint 'cross the street. Where was I? Oh, yes. Well, when I peer a-bond that curtain, you coulda bowled me over with a feather. There's that woman' statue all right, but it ain't a statue no more. It's a livin', hereskin', woman! An' what a woman! If'n she wasn't a statue to begin with, you'd say she was statuesque. What I mean, she wasn't just well-made, she was absolutely sculpted! Ev'rythin' 'bout her was high perfect. She was a-settin' on the floor a-talkin' to a bust o' some o' geener that looked mighty wise. Seemed like she was a-askin' him for advice an' though I couldn't see no how he moved his stone lips nor could I hear him say nothin', she acted like as if he was tellin' her somethin'. After awhile she smiles at him an' throws on a sorta gown an' begins dancin' around the place. Jus' 'nother short one for my rheumatiz, if you please. Ahh. Much obliged. Well, like I was sayin', she sorta floats in 'mongst 'nother batch o' statues—clothing dummies they was—an' sets herself down to talk to them like as if they was human. An', same as with the old geener head, she sorta waits for answers and cocks her head and nods like she's a-gettin' 'em. She founces around in that sleazy material an' tries on a string o' beads an' sings to herself somethin'. Like you'd maybe hear on a flute. I tell you, 'twas beautiful to behold. What happened then? Patience, son, patience. My whistle's a bit dry 'gain. Reckon as how it needs lubricatin'. Umm! That's right good. Well, nothin' much happened. I jus' watched her awhile an' drifted off to sleep. When I waked up, she was right back where she belonged, jus' a-standin' there. No, she wasn't human no more. She was a statue again. Stone-cold an' beautiful as ever an'—what's that word again?—statuesque. Bein' pretty conscientious, I tol' the owners what I seen, but you know somethin'? They didn't believe me. Tried to claim I musta been drunkin'. 'Magine! Me! Why I never touch a drop! All the same, you shoulda seen her. She was jus' rightly statuesque! Yep, statuesque!



For a moment there, at the very end, she remained a flesh-and-blood beauty, vibrant and alive, pulsating with allure among her insensate companions. And then, if you credit our story, she became one of them. If you doubt the tale, just think of the enchanting dreams that you've been missing





It isn't all banana peels and itching powder when the jokesters whip up pranks for the memory.

THE LOCAL Lover's Lane was a large, secluded clearing in the center of the woods that was reached by an old dirt road. Darkened cars dotted the area and from their confines came subdued squeals mingling with the more liquid sounds of love. A pre-war Chevy sedan eased down the road, cutting its lights as it came into the clearing and stopped. Unnoticed by its occupants was the car which followed it and glided to a halt at the entrance to the clearing.

After quite awhile, the side door of the Chevy opened and a sailor got out. A girl with smudged lipstick, her clothing in some disarray, followed him. His hand resting familiarly on her right buttock, he helped her into the back of the car.

For perhaps thirty seconds, everything was silent. Then, suddenly, the horn of the Chevy began blaring with the rhythmic cadence of a Sousa march. HONK-Honk! HONK-Honk! HONK! HONK! HONK! HONK!

All over the lot headlights began going on. One hot-rodder sought the cause of the disturbance with his searchlight. He focused on the offending car just as the sailor and the girl were exiting in embarrassment from the back. Laughs and catcalls went up from all over the lot.

But nobody laughed harder than the occupants of the car which had been following the Chevy. Only they knew that the disturbance had been caused by tying a length of copper wire from the horn under the hood to the springs in the back of the car in such a way that anything more than ordinary activity in the rear of the vehicle would set the horn off.

They'd gimmicked the car some hours before, while at a party with the sailor and his girl. They'd had to miss most of the party to do it, but when practical jokers are determined, almost nothing can deter them. They considered their time well-spent, for the gag went off perfectly.

It was a lulu. It had all the elements of the perfect practical joke. It took its victims by surprise. It had the savor of malice which is always present in the best of such pranks. And it was perpetrated on sex.

Sex is always a good atmosphere for the practical joke. One of the classic gags of all times, involving England's first Duke of Buckingham, also grew from a sex situation.

The Duke, known to intimates as "Steenbucker," was probably the most ambitious rose of his time. Court-ester, duchess and princesses flocked to his boudoir like jewel thieves to a Monaco wedding. But it was when he went abroad that his reputation reached its peak.

No less a personage than the Queen of France succumbed to Steenbucker's amorous charm. This, understandably, gave him a swollen head. He set out to seduce the crowned female heads of Europe and the next on his list was the Queen of Spain.

At first his endeavors with . . . Continued on next page

HANDBOOK FOR PRACTICAL JOKERS continued

the dark Spanish beauty were fruitless. She seemed cool, to say the least, to his suggestions of snout. But Steenbuck's was nothing if not persistent.

Evidently his persistence paid off, for the Queen finally consented to an engagement with him at a remote country inn. The Duke was elated. First the Queen of France and now the Queen of Spain. Surely he was the most irresistible of men.

When he entered the room at the inn, it was pitch-black. He began to complain that there were no candles, but a voice from the bed begged him not to waste precious moments on such trivialities. Silence waited no time whatsoever. Conscious that this was no less than England seducing Spain, he performed to the best of his considerable ability.

Later he went downstairs to the innkeeper for some candles. Lighting one, he re-entered the room and walked to the side of the bed. Lying there was the ugliest, most scabrous, obviously venerable old crone he had ever seen in his life!

The Duke had learned that a large sexual appetite can leave a man open to being a prize patsy in the realm of practical jokes. It was a lesson which was also brought home to a wealthy Long Island man recently.

This playboy is known among his society friends for his instant blinks. To see a pretty girl is to set the wheels in motion for him. He is quick to action and slow to regret.

But on one occasion, when his friends decided to teach him a lesson, his regrets were almost as instantaneous as his action. Out yachting with some male acquaintances one day, he sped an approaching boat which was seemingly loaded to the gunwales with half-clad females. When they were within hailing distance, the girls began yelling to him to join them.

The structure of the two boats made it impossible to cross directly from one to the other. The passionate man of action immediately lowered a dinghy single-handedly and began rowing for the chippie-loaded craft.

However, no sooner had he bent to the oars than the cargo of feminine pulchritude was steaming off in one direction and his own yacht was racing away in the other. Flailing back over the water from both was heavy laughter at his predicament. A couple of hours later, his friends returned to pick him up.

It's easy to see that this kind of practical joke is expensive. The men who pulled it had to pay for the girls' time and for hiring the boat and the total cost was perhaps something more than the gag was worth.

Still, it should be remembered that to men of this income group, the cash outlay was comparable to that spent by the average man to pull a prank with itching powder or a mechanical mouse. Most practical jokes involve some cost to their perpetrators, and the more money a man has the more he's likely to be willing to spend for a gag.

Keeping this in mind, it's easier to understand the socialite who went to considerable expense to install a "hangover room" in his Connecticut mansion. Whenever one of his guests imbibed to freely, this fellow would have him carted off to the "hangover room" to sleep it off.

The conception of the room is simple enough. Everything in it is upside down. Thus a victim of demon rum would wake from his alcoholic coma to find himself lying on the ceiling halfway between one wall and the chandelier. Seemingly looking down at the floor, he would see a chair, a table, a sofa and some ashtrays—all upside down. The door opposite him would have a transom almost flush with the ceiling on which he was reposing.

The befuddled, possibly pancake-stricken victim has three choices. He can try crawling down the near wall. He can make for the transom and try to hoist himself through it. Or he may make his way to the chandelier and cling to it desperately until help arrives.

The "hangover room" is the creation of an amateur jokester with money to spend. But most dedicated practical jokers manage to keep expenses at a minimum. Thus a fellow

named Hugh Troy, perhaps the most incorrigible practical joker in New York, pulled one of his best gags for a cash outlay of only 90 cents.

One election night many years ago Hugh bought a mixed batch of papers bearing the headline "ROOSEVELT ELECTED" and put them away to wait for an opportune moment. Some years later, on New Year's Eve, he felt the moment had come. He handed out the papers to guests at a party he was throwing and they embarked on a tour of the New York subways. It's easy to picture the effect on a New Year's reveler who upon entering a subway car was greeted by the sight of some 25 or 30 people each reading a newspaper with this headline. To say that he might feel disoriented would be putting it mildly.

On another occasion Hugh and a friend were seated on a bench in Central Park when a policeman came along. Getting to their feet, they calmly picked up the bench and began walking off with it. The cop protested and when they refused to put the bench down, he escorted them to the station house. Here Hugh produced a bill of sale proving that the bench was his. He and the friend then went back to another section of the park and repeated the prank. The third time they pulled it, the precinct lieutenant personally threatened to beat their brains out if he ever laid eyes on them again.

The gag was wearing thin anyway, so Hugh decided it involved time, trouble, and some expense, and it raised the question of whether Hugh was engaged in some sort of mild revenge against the New York Police Department. Only Hugh himself knows the answer to that, but certainly many other practical jokes have been prompted by the desire for revenge.

Nothing arouses such a desire so much as the resentment a man may harbor when he's fired from a job. If he's ingenious enough, such a man may leave a lasting memory.

There's one large advertising agency on New York's Madison Avenue that will never forget the parting gesture of one disgruntled employee. In mid-Continued p. 55

Desert Island Playmates

As Cruise's dreary life was brightened by those footprints
in the sand, so this levy of beauties makes any isle sublime



What every shipwrecked sailor should have—
a harem of lovehies like Lisa St. Clair, left,
and Lydia Jean, above, to keep his mind from
pondering the cares of the weary world.



Seaching for water you might come
across Jo Weason (right) taking
a dip, or Kay Nichols electrifying a
cool glade with her horrid torso.



ONE WAY to test a guy's taste in literature is to ask him what three books he would choose to take with him were he shipwrecked on a desert island. Along these lines, we've come up with a method of determining a man's A.O.O.S. (Awareness of the Opposite Sex)... If you happened to find yourself washed up

on the beach of a lush tropical paradise far from civilization, which of the 12 luscious lovelies on these pages would you pick for a playmate? Would it be sultry Lana St. Clair, or blonde and bouncy Kay Nichols? Super-shaped Laurie Shane, or maybe the peppy Sandy Lane? How about Susan Blair, Marta Ford, or any

of the other beauties? It's tough to make a choice, we know. That's why we're presenting them all to you for your selection. What's that? You want all of them? Why, you greedy little... Come to think of it, who can blame you for wanting all of Heaven's blessings right here on earth? We all can dream, can't we? ●

On your desert island, what could be more heartwarming than to pass a few lovely hours with luscious Laurie Shane?



Desert Island Playmates continued

How to make the most of what you can find is shown by Blaise Storr's leopard-skin outfit. And how about seeing someone as swell as Sandy Lane washed up on a stretch of beach?



China Gerard dances for joy on discovering there are men on this island. We're pretty glad, too.



A lovely on the rocks as this little bit of heaven is the fresh radiance of curvy Jean Carroll.



Ooah! 'Scuse us, Susan Storr. We didn't know anybody but us was takin' a dip on this beach.

There's a Ford in your future somewhere on the desert paradise if you can find where marvelous Merta Ford, below, is hiding. And while you're beating the bush for beauties, try to find ecstatic Ella Rose.



Last but by no stretch of the mind least in our berry is scintillating blonde Cynthia Carter.

THE FLATTED 5TH...

an investigation
into investigations
or how the
country got into
the state it's in



NOW "BIG AL"...AH, I MEAN MR. APPALIACCI,
WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXPLAIN
TO YOUR MILLIONS OF TV FANS
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE 3 MILLION
YOU FORGOT TO GIVE TO UNCLE SAM
BETWEEN 1952 AND 1957?



NOW THEN SENATOR, YOU
JUST AINT GOT A SENSE OF
HUMOUR AT ALL... IS ALL...



THESE GIRLS
ARE LIKE MY OWN
DAUGHTERS,
THEY JUST HANKER
TO LET DOWN THEIR
INHIBITIONS EVERY
ONCE IN A WHILE!

...WERE YOU A
HOODLUM?



I REFUSE...

...CAN YOU
TALK?



I DECLINE...

...ARE YOU
ALIVE?



I RESPECTFULLY
RECLINE...



♪ We respectfully
refuse to answer
the question on the
grounds it might
tend to 'criminate us! ♪



BUT YOUR HONOUR,
I RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT
THAT THIS IS THE ONLY
SONG MY CLIENTS KNOW!

BUT YA HONOUR
ALL I TOLD HIM
WAS, HE
SHOULD
IMPROVE
ON HIS
MUSICAL
APPRECIATION...



AND I
HAPPEN TO BE A VERY GOOD SALESMAN!!



MISS LAVERNE,
WOULD IT BE
TOO MUCH
TROUBLE
TO EXPLAIN
TO YOUR
AUDIENCE
HOW IT IS A
LIBRARIAN
EARNING

\$30 PER
WEEK
MANAGES
TO MAINTAIN
A \$150 A WEEK
APARTMENT
ON PARK AVE.?
(AND A CHAUFFEUR!)



...WERE YOU
BORN?



I DON'T REMEMBER!...

WOULD THE GENTLEMEN
OF THE COURT KINDLY
PICK UP THEIR
HARDWARE
BEFORE
LEAVING
THE COURT?



WILLARD GORDON





Beauty in Orbit

For out-of-this-world eye appeal, the sultriest Space Cadet we know is a luscious lovely named Lynda Scott.

OPEN letter to the Chief of the U.S. Space Program. Knowing how difficult it is to find recruits who are willing to brave the dangers of the outer reaches, we respectfully offer the following solution to your problem—Why not put a beautiful girl into each space ship to keep up the morale of the crews? For the first Queen of Outer Space, we nominate sensational Lynda Scott. Her qualifications? A streamlined 37-24-36 form, guaranteed to put any rocket jockey in the mood for flyin' high, plus a first-hand knowledge of the latest advances in the field of space travel. The first she got from Mother Nature, but the latter talent was acquired at her place of business. When Lynda's not busy decorating a piece of sensitive paper treated with a silver compound (film to you), she works as secretary to the Science Editor of one of the major wire services. There, she keeps in touch with all that goes on at Cape Canaveral, and wherever else those blast-off boys send their missiles into the blue. From velocity to trajectory and back again, Lynda's a whiz when it comes to rocketry.

Come to think of it, sending smashing Scott up in a Vanguard or Thor would be pretty much of a waste. We'll admit that the guys who wander way up yonder beyond the stratosphere need cheering up, but there are so many more of us here on earth that could use her sunny services. Why, just by looking at a few pictures of her charming self puts us in the mood for bigger and better things. She may be a universal sweetheart, but we'd prefer to keep her right nearby, so we can gaze to our heart's content.



THE ART OF RICHMANSHIP



Bona fide rich man (a) disdains headgear, (b) slouches fashionably, (c) can afford to smile, (d) favors open-collar sport shirts, (e) has time to be a hairy-chested athlete, (f) is careless about buttons, (g) sometimes loses them, (h) doesn't care if his shirt hangs out, (i) keeps up on the Windsors (j) eschews rings, (k) doesn't give a damn if his pants are creased, (l) his socks are in style, or (m) his shoes are shined. Neatness counts—but not among the rich!

Peer men's conception of rich man includes (a) stylish fedora creased just so, (b) unsmiling outlook, (c) button-down collar, (d) conservative hat, (e) exclusive fraternity pin, (f) drab vest, (g) Ivy League suit, (h) gold cuff links, (i) leather-bound first edition of a rare classic, (j) expensive ring, (k) walking stick, (l) razor-edge trouser crease and (m) highly polished shoes. The genuine rich man hardly ever looks like this—but many a poor man does.

The road to wealth winds through fabulous estates, exclusive clubs and plush resorts. The first step on that road is the study of richmanship!

BY JOHN PORTER

SEE THAT FELLOW riding by in the chauffeured limousine? Remember him? That's right, he was one of the kids on the corner, one of the kids without two nickels to rub together. Today he's worth millions.

How'd he do it? He married a rich girl, that's how. And how'd he manage that? The answer, friend, lies in *The Art of Richmanship*.

Richmanship is the knack of appearing wealthy when you're not and of convincing people who really are rich that you are one of them. Only through richmanship can a poor man wed a rich girl, or get in on the ground floor of a big stock deal, or finance his own idea for making a million dollars. In short, only through richmanship can a poor man become rich.

To successfully practice richmanship, it is necessary to study the genuine rich man, the fellow born with a silver spoon in his mouth and a diaper-load of gilt-edged securities. How does he act? What makes him tick?

The answer to both questions may be summed up in a single word: understatement. It's the key to his character, the key to richmanship, and it works as follows:

In matters of money—The rich man is casual about money. He rarely talks about it. He never carries a great deal on his person. (He doesn't have to, his credit is good wherever he goes.) He doesn't wave around a bankroll trying to impress people.

As a rule—any waiter or cab driver will bear this out—he is not a good tipper. If dissatisfied with service, he may not tip at all.

He is loathe to lend money to even the best of his friends and looks upon a request for such a loan as being in poor taste. On the other hand, he is capable of backing over the price of something with the fervor of the most experienced peddler in an Arab marketplace. He is always determined to get his dollar's worth.

His attitude about money has been conditioned from birth. Far from taking the green stuff for granted,

it is the mark of the rich man that he knows the value of his wealth. Yet, always, his outward attitude must be casual. This attitude is carried over to—

His manner of dress—The rich man does not wear Ivy League suits and button-down collars. He does not sport vicuna overcoats. He does not fever a Homburg and carry a cane. In short, he does not dress according to the popular conception of the man who can afford to be well-dressed.

Just because he can afford to, he dresses to suit his comfort and a near-sleepiness is his hallmark. He favors sport jackets and flannel slacks (usually uncreased—he doesn't have to impress anybody). He goes hatless when he feels like it and at other times he is apt to wear a best up old chapeau that he's grown accustomed to through the years. His shoes are usually scuffed and he likes open-neck shirts.

In the daytime, while his clothes are suited to whatever activity he's engaging in, they aren't shiny-new, nor in the latest style. His riding togs are nondescript (admissible riding habits are for Central Park, not the wealthy, private estates of Long Island). His tennis shirt may have a small rip in the armpit. His beach jacket is faded.

However, come evening, his attire is usually impeccable. He dresses for dinner—even if he's just dining with his family. If there are guests, he wears a tuxedo—or possibly tails—with the air of a man who is used to such formality. He never runs his finger around the inside of his collar or strains at the confines of his starched shirt.

Whether dressing down or dressed up, he is at ease in what he wears, just as he is at ease—

With other rich men—The rich man is unimpressed by his equals, even those who might be considered his betters by reason of having more money. No matter how well he knows them, a certain formality of politeness is always maintained with men of standing. Also, he is up on the latest topics of conversation among the rich, something the student richman must learn.

The conversation of the wealthy falls roughly into three categories: society; the stock market; and the ins and outs of golf, tennis, or polo.

The first topic, society, does not just mean people with whom the rich man is personally acquainted, but rather includes the luminaries of the world of the rich. Thus one at all times should be up on the whereabouts of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and what they're doing, on the latest scandals of high society and on the doings of the families of the men one finds oneself with (a negative, but important point which may keep the novice richman from committing a faux pas).

The second topic, the stock market, is far safer. The genuine rich man automatically commits to memory the ups and downs of the day's trading. The student must develop this knack in order to intelligently discuss the market with those in the know. (This may prove extremely profitable if a fellow's on his toes.)

Topic Number Three is a snap compared to the first two. All it requires is the ability to listen. The rich man's fact is a polite mask when he's conversed with the story of "the longest drive I ever made," or "how my slashing backhand won the day," or the pony that "was like greased lightning." The tyro richman doesn't even have to know anything about the sports involved. He just has to develop the mask.

Actually, it's easy to talk to rich men. It's much more difficult to make conversation—

With rich women—The rich girl is the end product of suffragetteism and has the money to make it stick. She's independent to an extreme and she makes sure that any man she comes in contact with—rich or poor—knows it. One must tread on eggs when talking to her—especially if one is practicing richmanship and doesn't want to be found out.

Her speech may be soft, cultured, polite—and suddenly punctuated by the purplest four-letter word. Thus she drives home the fact that she is an independent spirit. However, should a man be uncouth enough to use the word first, she will fall back on her. (Continued on next page)

THE ART OF RICHMANSHIP continued

femininity in shock and outrage. And it will tip her off to the fact that he is merely a bogus member of her class.

She is always on the lookout for this anyway. Deep down, she fears that any man who is interested in her may actually be after her money. That's one subject—that's taboo with rich women—particularly if one is seeking a rich wife.

There's no taboo on discussing sex, though. This is undoubtedly one of the favorite topics of the wealthy young woman. The thing to remember is that such discussions should always be roundabout on the man's part—no matter how frank the girl may seem to be — and well-laced with highflown innuendo.

When they are in the mood, rich girls can afford to shed their morals. However, when that time comes, they will let the man know. A premature proposition is a sure tip-off that a guy is no gentleman. And even though she may agree, the man has hurt his status as a member of high society irreparably.

Yes, pitfalls mark the course of the potential richman as he deals with the fair sex. They are as apt to give him away as his relations—

With servants—The rich man has had servants around him all his life. He is so used to them that he rarely sees them as people. This, despite the fact that he may ask after their health, inquire for their families, or ask their advice about household matters.

This blindness does not necessarily mark the rich man as a snob. On the contrary, it is the servant himself who maintains the distance in the relationship. He has nothing but contempt for one who would try to treat him as an equal. There is no greater snob than a valet, a head-waiter, or a butler.

It follows that there is nobody as likely as a servant to spot a phony. In the presence of a menial, richmanship is put to its severest test.

In such a presence, the richman should speak as little as possible and try to avoid addressing the servant directly. He should watch his manners, take the host's lead as to which article of cutlery is called for, be careful not to overtip if tip-

ping is in order and never say "thank you" for those services which should be taken for granted. If, however, a slight extra service is involved, or an additional courtesy rendered, a "thank you" is indicated.

Only by constant association with the rich can one master all the intricacies of coping with servants. It's the one important bit of background one can't get by—

Reading the society columns—Every newspaper has one of these columns, and they're invariably written in a jargon all their own. It is a jargon readily understood by the genuine members of society who read the columns regularly to keep up with the doings of their fellows. But to the uninitiated, the language may be misleading — or downright Greek. The better to understand, let's look at some key words which are constantly cropping up in these columns. For instance:

Mayfair—Actually a fashionable residential district comprising part of the West End of London, it is frequently used by society columnists to describe that which is exclusive and luxurious. (Example: Mrs. H. Stokes-Crankshaw hosted a Mayfair ball at her home in Palm Beach.)

Cottage—\$100,000 estate. (Example: The Van Seydies gave a party for an intimate group of friends at their cottage on Long Island.)

Intimate group—Five hundred people; four hundred of whom they never met before, and the other hundred being people they loathe.

Sought after—having mob appeal. (Example: The Duke and Duchess were the most sought after couple by the northern robe of Cannes last season.)

Glimpsed—caught in the act. (Example: Mr. John Chaser and Mrs. B. Cort, whose husband is in Philadelphia on business, were glimpsed holding hands at the Harwyn last night.)

Shed—ridding oneself of one's mate. (Example: Having shed his eighth wife, Tommy Manville. . .)

After mastering the lingo of the society columnists, the student richman will come to realize why their daily scribbles are basic reading

for one who would invade the world of the wealthy. From them are learned the who's-who and what's-what of society. From them may be gleaned the true nature of—

The "400"—Back in 1880, Ward McAllister told a New York Tribune reporter that "there are only about 400 people in fashionable society." To this day, the term is used to denote high society and many people think there are still only 400 people in that select group.

It just isn't so. There are closer to 40,000 people than 400 in society today—and that means bona fide members, not including the richmen who are not yet rich. It's easy to see that a few fellows practicing *The Art of Richmanship* should be able to go unnoticed among so many of the genuine article.

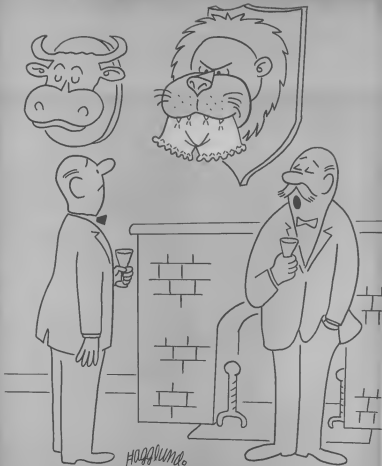
Remember, though, going unnoticed means passing as a rich man among rich men. It does not mean being unknown to them. Any poor man can do that.

But the poor man using richmanship must bring himself to the attention of those who count. He must court invitations to exclusive affairs. He must subtly ingratiate himself into bridge foursomes. He must cultivate a ready wit and a likeable personality so that when the all-important guest lists are being drawn up, his name will be on them.

To insure his popularity, he must first of all insure his availability. He can't hold a nine-to-five job and expect to practice richmanship. The wealthy don't play at regular hours and the richman has to suit their convenience.

It may involve some hardship at first, but the rewards are great. They include summers in Newport and winters in Palm Beach, champagne breakfasts and steak dinners, Rolls Royces and Jaguars. They will gain you the respect of the mighty and the adulation of the many. And when you're riding down the street, somebody's sure to say—

See that fellow riding by in the chauffeured limousine? Remember Ann? That's right, he was one of the kids on the corner, one of the kids without two nickels to rub together. Today he's worth millions! ●



Haggund.

The

Laurie Amberson
couldn't have known
there was magic in
her bathtub that would
make her every
wish come true. She was
dazzled by the spell,
but not as dazzled as
you'll be by the spell
Laurie herself casts!



Legend of Milady's Bath



ONCE UPON A TIME, way back in the 26th Century when all manner of strange and marvellous things happened, a glamor princess known as Laurie Amberson lived in an enchanted cottage in the fairyland of Miami, Florida. Of course, she didn't know that the cottage was enchanted. Nor was she aware that the spell was particularly strong in the chamber set aside for bathing. (In those days, surrounded by all sorts of magical contrivances—small amulets that burst into flame at the touch of a thumb, bewitched spigots that spouted water at a flick of the wrist and curious cabinets that produced dozes in one's living room without so much as an incantation—people scoffed at the very idea of sorcery.) The idea that the bathtub itself was possessed of the power to bring her luck never occurred to Laurie as she set about preparing to bathe. "Methinks Milady will draw herself a bath," she murmured to herself and filled the tub with warm water. She sudsed up a bubble-bath and stepped delicately into the frothy concoction.

Continued on next page



"I wish I could get a modeling job," she thought wistfully as she lolled in the tub. "I could sure use the money." Immediately the phone rang. Dropping rainbow bubbles, Miledy answered it. It was top photographer Bunny Yeager. "Can you pose for me right away?" she wanted to know. "Well, I'm taking a bath," Laurie started to say. "Swell. I'll be right over," Bunny answered and hung up. She found Laurie in the tub when she arrived. "How are you?" she asked, snapping a quick shot of unplanned allure. "All right except for the heat," Laurie answered. "I wish it would rain and cool things off."

As if in answer, there was a loud clap of thunder and a deluge of raindrops pattered against the window. "There's service," said Bunny. "Rain, rain, go away," answered Laurie playfully and—to her astonishment—the rain stopped. She decided to test her new-found power. "I wish Bob would call and ask me out tonight," she said. The phone jingled. It was Bob, asking her out. "That's really something you've got going for you there," said Bunny, still clicking away. "It sure is," said Laurie delightedly. "You know, this bathtub must be enchanted." And she loved happily ever after. ●



THE JOKER'S GEMS

"Fifteen dollar."

"Too much."

"Ten dollar."

"Still too much. All I want to spend is five."

She turned on her heel and left him. He went back to his hotel, rejoined his wife and escorted her out to dinner. As they were walking down the street, they bumped into the same lady of shame. She surveyed the stingy fellow's dumpy, dowdy spouse and addressed him contemptuously in these words:

"See what you get for five dollars!"

fresh, but you remind me so much of my mother."

He was rewarded with a deadly sweet smile. "Now isn't that odd," she purred. "I'm married."

Did you ever wonder where mothers learn the things they tell their daughters not to do?

A musician is a fellow who wakes up fit as a fiddle and goes to sleep light as a drum.

THE MORNING AFTER

He glances over cocktails
That seemed to be so sweet
Don't seem quite so amorous
Over the Shredded Wheat

They played it fair. They played it square. Naturally they lost.

George was notable for three things: his glass eye which bobbed loosely in its socket, his capacity for Martinis and his carelessness. The three combined one day when the glass eye fell out and landed in his cocktail. George unwittingly drank it. A few days later, George began experiencing extreme pain. He had himself to a doctor. The medico peered down George's throat and pulled back in surprise.

"What's the matter, Doc? What is it? Can you help me?" George prattled nervously. "Please, can you help me?"

The doctor peered down his throat again and again saw the glass eye looking back at him. He drew himself up with dignity and addressed George. "I may be able to help you," he said, "but first you have to learn to trust me!"

One poverty-stricken fellow we know is always raising about what a great doctor he has. Seemingly the doctor told him he needed an operation and the fellow couldn't afford it, so the considerate medico re-tooled his X-rays.

The American tourist escaped from his wife just long enough to pursue the streetwalkers of Paris. One of the cunning wenches approached him.

"Twenty-five dollar American, Joe," she propositioned him.

"Too much," answered the pennurious Yankee.



"Our distinguished visitor, missing since eight o'clock, may be the victim of foul play, says the mayor."

THE REBEL'S LAST REVEL

(Continued from page 2)

sparkling, he materialized from behind the blanket of rain and strolled towards Tom. He eased the ammo belt off his shoulders and slipped into the chair opposite him. "Water? Another glass?" Clark was in high spirits.

Tom looked at him tolerantly. "How did it go?"

"How did it go?" Clark laughed jocularly. "Well, amigo, You won't believe how well!"

Tom smiled. Clark's reports were never simple. It was never just "Mission accomplished." It was always a fabulous adventure to Clark and he had to tell it with flourishes and little intimate touches to make it come alive. Tom waited patiently while Clark drained his glass of wine in one deep swallow and stretched his arms above his head in the characteristic gesture of a story-teller organizing his material.

"We ambled into the city singly and in pairs," he began. "Like long-suffering peons, peasant handgrips licking urban hands for pesos to buy food. So help me, I felt like a propaganda poster dressed in that tattered serape and cringing along with my tail between my legs." Clark laughed.

"It took two days before we'd all managed to slip inside the city walls without arousing suspicion," he continued. "The night of the second day we gathered in Manuel's warehouse and I outlined the plan. It went off like clockwork—about one the next morning."

"The soldiers gave you no trouble?" Tom asked.

"The girls had gotten the sentries nice and drunk. Now they are nice and dead. A pity. Without ever having tasted the fruit of some of those serenos! This country has the most beautiful women I've ever seen. And that brings me to the part of the story you won't believe—"

"Just a minute," Tom interrupted. "Tell me about your amours later. Right now I want to hear about the army."

Clark shrugged. "A dull tale. We killed 13, possibly 14 soldiers. We came away with 200-odd rifles, over a thousand rounds of ammo, a small but select assortment of grenades and high explosives."

"There was no outcry?"

"The men in the barracks sneered through it all like automatic babies. The judicious use of knife and garrote kept their sleep from being disturbed by uneasy noise. Our men slipped out of the city with their deadly toys like the quiet mice they are."

"All except you."

"All except me," Clark chuckled. "Now, General mio, I know I'm a

day late, but believe me, I've got an excuse—and a truly fantastic story."

"Okay," Tom sighed good-humoredly. "Let's hear it."

"Well, I was with Jose's cart making for the East Gate, where we'd bribed the guard, when we spotted this bunch of fancy-tailored Army officers coming up the street. They're half-crooked, but you know how these boys are. They had some girls with them and I was afraid they'd get offensive and start investigating the cart just to show what big men they were. So Jose took the cart into a back alley and I walked up to the brigs to distract them so he could make a break for it."

"That was clever," said Tom wryly. "With your Spanish accent an infant machocha would peg you as a Yankee."

"I figured that, so I walked right up and introduced myself as a visiting American."

"You what?" Tom looked at him in amazement. "All dressed up like a pampas peon you told them you were an American. Weren't they suspicious?"

"Naturally. And that was just the distraction Jose needed. While they were bullying me, he got away with the cartload of booty."

"I see." Tom was amused. "And how did you explain your peasant costume?"

"I told them I'd been beaten and robbed of my clothing—that I'd borrowed this outfit from a trusting bartender. As a matter of fact, I got quite arrogant about it. Asked them what the hell kind of a country they

were running here, where a visiting gentleman wasn't safe in the streets. Threatened to complain to my consulate, to Washington, to the U. N."

Tom sat back and laughed. "Clark, you are fabulous! Did they really swallow that hogwash?"

"Well, they were kind of dubious, but now comes the really fantastic part. One of the women speaks up and they all stop back to let her through. She walks up to me and I tell you, for once I was speechless. It was Dolores Destaro!"

Tom whistled. "The dictator's lady? I'll be damned!"

"You may well be," agreed Clark, "and when you hear the rest of my story, you'll know why."

"Go on."

"Well, she stops practically nose-to-nose with me and looks me over like a farmer sizing up a stud bull. I wouldn't have been surprised if she'd pried open my mouth to look at my teeth and I half-expected her to pinch my leg muscles."

"Finally she turns to the bunch of uniformed dandies and says, 'This man is obviously a Norte Americano and a gentleman. You sons of fatherless pigs will stop harassing him!'"

"They backed off and she turns to me and says just as sweet as could be, 'You will come with me, Senor, and I will see that your garments are replaced and perhaps a hot bath and some food and wine will make you look more kindly on the hospitality of our poor country.'"

"Well, what could I do?" She had a car, one of those foreign sport jobs, around the corner and we went to her place."

"The dictator's palace?" Tom shook his head to clear it. "Was Destaro there?"



"No. He's down south playing footsie with a brother rat and trying to raise some lucre to keep the palace running. El Presidente trusts Dolan to run things while he's away."

"Why not? She's capable. And you have to admire her loyalty to her husband."

"In matters of government only," Clark leered. "In matters of the heart she's as faithful as an alley cat."

"Oh, come on now. You're not going to tell me you—" Tom began.

"I said you wouldn't believe it. But honest, Tom, it happened. She took me up to this sitting-room and ordered the servants to bring food and drink and prepare a bath. And she had them bring me down a suit belonging to El Presidente himself." Clark stood and threw open the peasant blanket he was wearing. "How do you like it? It's a little large in the belly and the cuffs have to be let out, but it's genuine imported Scottish tweed."

Tom wiped his hand over his forehead. "What a revolution!"

"You can say that again. Anyway, I ate and we both drank some wine and then she cuddled down next to me on the couch. You know Tom, she's really a damnably beautiful woman. She can't be over thirty and she has skin like velvet. And those eyes! They look right through you and on the way they tell you just what she wants and how she wants it."

"I presume you gave satisfaction."

"I did. And received the same in return. When Castilian and Indian blood is mixed well, the results are truly wonderful. She has a body like one of those ancient Italian statues. Everything large and firm and voluptuous. And she has the rhythm of that early New Orleans jazz."

"Spare me the sordid details," Tom held up his hand.

"They're the best part, but if you insist—Anyway, later we sat there and sipped more wine. Then she turned to me and said, 'You know, Yankee, I didn't really believe your story about being beaten and robbed.'"

"Oh, fine," said Tom. "And what did you say?"

"I admitted the story had been a lie. I told her that I was really an American working with the rebels and that we had just raided an armory."

"Come again?"

"That's right. I told her exactly what really happened and she thought it was all a joke. We had a big laugh over it. The idea of El Presidente's lady entertaining a professional revolutionary."

"And after that she let you go?" exclaimed Tom.

"Sure. After I promised to return again in a few nights. She said I was

the best lover she ever had." Clark stretched his body with self-satisfaction. "She said I'd given her more pleasure than any man she'd ever known and that if I was a rebel, she'd pardon me. Of course she was kidding when she said that, but you never know."

"Nice comes the funniest part of the whole story, the part that'll give you the biggest kick, Tom. See, when she asked—"

The sudden jerking up of Tom's head kept Clark from completing the sentence. He swiveled around in his chair to see the reason for Tom's change of expression. Sixteen poncho-clad soldiers had appeared at the edge of the cafe patio and sixteen rifles were now leveled at Clark and Tom.

A seventeenth man, an officer, stepped out from between two men. "You are under arrest. You will come with us," he said, not without politeness.

Clark looked at Tom who shook his head slightly. It was useless to resist. They were trapped.

They were led off to the rain-pocked adobe building which served as the local jail. As they were ushered through its portals, Clark spied a chrome-covered foreign sport car parked in the mud. He nudged Tom. "That's hers. Dolores Desaire's. She must have had me followed."

"That's just great, lover-boy."

"Silencio!" ordered the officer in command. Then, in a more reasonable tone, he added, "You will please not speak without permission."

They were put in a small cell and a guard was posted outside the barred door. "Tom, there's something I have to tell you," Clark began.

"El Capitan says silencio," interrupted the guard. "You will not speak."

Tom shrugged his shoulders. They might as well be quiet. No sense asking for trouble. He squatted on the floor against the wall and closed his eyes. Clark perched opposite him, nibbling his nails nervously. He didn't mind danger when he was active, but he had no stomach for this. Justice was swift in the banana republics. And what could a man do against a firing squad?

Clark started to speak two or three times, but each time the guard silenced him. Perhaps an hour passed. Finally the captain who had arrested them appeared outside the cell.

"Senior Baxter?" He looked from Clark to Tom.

Tom got to his feet. The guard opened the cell door.

"You are a fortunate hombre, Senior Baxter," the captain said. "I have been detailed to escort you to the border of our country. There you will be set free. However, should you ever attempt to return,

your head will be the price you pay."

"What about my comrade?" Tom indicated Clark.

"The firing squad is being readied."

"No!" Clark's protest was loud. His face was white between the bars. "No! There's been a terrible mistake. I demand to be taken to Senior Desaire! It's a mistake, I tell you! A mistake!"

"What kind of a mistake, Senior?" The captain was still polite.

At the reasonableness of his tone, Clark calmed himself. When he answered, his words were directed at Tom. "I'm sorry, Tom, but I tried to tell you before. Remember I told you Dolores said she'd pardon me? Well, as part of the gag, when she asked my name, I gave her yours. She knew who you were, of course. Every peasant in the country whispers of the Yankee who's come to set them free. At the time she thought it was very funny that the rebel General should make love to El Presidente's wife—and she forgave you the revolution because of your prowess as a lover."

"But it wasn't you, Tom! It was me! It's me she thinks she's saving now. I'm sorry, Tom, but it's either my life or yours." He turned back to the captain who hadn't at all followed what he'd said. "I must see Senior Desaire!"

The captain hesitated a moment. Then the sound of marching boots turning into the corridor made up his mind. "I'm sorry, Senior, but that is impossible. The firing squad is waiting."

"What do you mean? I must see her! It's a mistake! A terrible mistake!" Clark's yell rang in Tom's ears as the captain escorted him past the squad of soldiers. But for Tom there was only one choice. A fool's choice perhaps, but the only one a man like Tom could make.

"I want to see Senior Desaire while there is still time to save my friend," he told the captain.

The officer motioned to a soldier to guard Tom. "I will see if she will see you," he said and entered the door leading to the jailkeeper's office.

He returned quickly and escorted Tom through the door. Tom looked straight into the eyes of the darkly beautiful woman seated behind the battered desk. "I'm Tom Baxter," he said firmly.

"I know that," she answered. "You know that? But my friend? Didn't you think he was me? I mean, didn't you mean to spare his life?"

She looked at him with amusement. "You would really die in his place, Senior Baxter? Ah, no, I see you would. I did not know there were any men like you left in this pigsty of a world."

"In any case, do not trouble your-

self. No mistake has been made. Your comrade is dying because he dared oppose the government with violence. And his dying has my particular sanction because he is a convicted dog who thought he could get away with making a fool of me."

"But I don't understand," said Tom. "I too have opposed your regime. Why are you sparing my life?"

"Ah, you visionaries!" Dolores Destaro shook her head in amusement. "When all your revolutions are won, how will you ever govern? You have no head for politics."

"Senior Baxter, you are idolized by the rebellious peasantry. The quickest way to insure the success of the revolution against us would be to make a martyr of you. As a matter of fact, I'm surprised that some of your more zealous fellows haven't

had you assassinated long ago and put the blame on us. As a dead rebel leader you would be the symbol of our own death warrants."

"Won't you please reconsider sparing my countryman's life?"

"No. He has killed. He has plundered. He has dared to make a fool of me. And he has not the excuse of your idealism."

"But," Senora Destaro added reflectively, "I have no doubt he will make the ladies of Hell supremely happy..."

A volley of bullets from the courtyard outside put the period to her words. Tom followed the captain from the room.



ALEX IN WONDERLAND

(Continued from page 12)

the New York Sunday World as a cartoonist. He'd walk all the way up to the Fifth on 8th Avenue on his payday lunch hour and window shop. Captivated by the elegant silk ties at Sullivan's, King fingered his \$25 salary in his pocket as he rifled through the \$50 Sullivas on the counter. A clerk King describes as having a face "like a shishone with eyebrows," showed him two dozen crepe de chine pink ties which he kept under the counter for his special friends. For one dollar apiece, how could anyone go wrong? King picked up half-a-dozen and went back to work, proud of having gotten such a bargain at such a swank store.

But, the office clerks couldn't let the pink neckwear pass. They kidded King unmercifully. He found one of his ties, which he had taken off prior to washing, in a large gut pot. Still Alex wouldn't bend to the throng's jeers.

After six months had gone by, the ribbing gradually died down. The day came when the ties needed a cleaning, so he brought them to a dry cleaner on West Fourth Street. A day later the place was gutted by fire and all the pink ties were destroyed.

Not wanting to look like a reformed character at the office, King bought three yards of pink crepe de chine and had a custom tie maker fashion 63 ties for a mere \$12.

Some thirty years later, in 1947, an airline misplaced King's luggage. All but one of his pink ties were in the lost suitcases. So, back went Alex to the same custom tie maker he'd been patronizing through the years. Instead of the elderly man, King found the owner's son there. He was about to close up the little place once and for all. It seems the business had been a long propo-

tion for years, but the old tie maker's sons had kept it going to keep him active. "But," said the son, "for the last eight or ten years, the only jobs that came his way were your (King's) pink ties. My father was convinced that you painted naked girls on those ties, and that you sold them at stag parties." Since then King has never bought another pink tie because he's never had the heart to take his business elsewhere.

When King told this story and other, equally dull tales of his misadventures over the Jack Paar show on TV, audience response was tremendous. He'd come on the show as a guest to publicize his best-selling autobiography, "Mine Enemy: Groves Older" and Paar was all too glad to have him back a second time. The two visits aroused the interest of WNTA-TV in New York and soon King was launched on his own show, "Alex in Wonderland."

It was an immediate hit, although its format is like nothing else television has ever known. It consists mainly of King simply talking for an hour, with an occasional interlude during which his wife sings or the network slips in an occasional commercial.

What does he talk about? Anything and everything. His faithful fans never know what to expect. Indeed, King himself has no idea what he's likely to say until he says it. These delighted listeners are apt to hear hisardonically good-natured harangues on a variety of subjects.

Lashing out at advertising, King told viewers that with a few million dollars "you could make the chewing of king-sized gum droppings a national hobby that would put Wrigley out of business."

Men in white jackets, he contin-

ued, would authoritatively state that "the Greeks worshipped the goat as a god and that it is the most ancient symbol of virility. Let this powerful symbol carry the burden of your worries and anxieties. Let this be your Scape Goat. Scape Goat for lively liveliness!"

Apocryph of marriage, King said that "because two people have been lagging the same cart for years together and are now afflicted with similar harness sores, it's not enough reason to continue with the burden, particularly if their load is slowly turning into garbage." Boasted the thrice divorced Alex, "I never was married less than five years to anybody, which proves that there was nothing trivial or temporary about my love affairs."

He also prescribed a practical formula for happiness in love. "I would just as soon be loved for my money as for my looks. Once looks fade, you can't get them back. Money, you can make and lose, over and over."

Just before Frank Lloyd Wright died a few months ago, King aimed a few headlines at the master builder's latest shelter for modern art, the Guggenheim Museum, on upper Fifth Avenue.

"It's not a solo, but an absolute horror. It was designed by a very great man... who designed the Johnson Wax Building, which looks like a baby powder box. It's interesting. It leaks a little. Yes, they have to use wax all the time to straighten it out. But this thing on Fifth Avenue... if it were a paper weight, if it were in a park—it's an abomination. The only thing that makes me feel good is that the stuff that's going into it is just as disastrous."

Describing Wright as a great architect, King added, "but like all great architects, he has to overstate his case. That's the nature of all prophets. They have to get hoarse shouting."

But if King's barbs at famous people and hallowed institutions are sharp, his adherents point out that in using his acid wit, he rarely spares himself. He has a wit less than half his age who appears on his show with him and one night he wryly informed viewers that "if they thought 'Looney' was a piece of fantasy, let them look at us!"

In needing himself, King's video visual splashes witfully about his nine years of drug addiction. Doctors started him on morphine to ease the pain of his kidney ailments and he soon developed an addict's craving for the stuff. He has been in Lexington, the Federal Narcotics Institution, four times. However, he has not been back since 1954 when he managed to "kick the habit."

His views on junksies, himself included, are unique because his is possibly the only humorous outlook

THE PUSHBUTTON PEOPLE EATERS

(Continued from page 29)

it was after a gleeful peek at the waning balance in my bankbook which it had swallowed one day in a fit of frustration), it choked to death on the contents of my wife's sewing box—two knitting needles, a pair of scissors and a pincushion.

But that vacuum cleaner had no job to do here. It could have learned from the TV set which caused my myopia and turned my wallet into a smorgasbord for repairmen — with everybody coming back for second, and third helpings.

It was truly diabolical, proclaiming its evil horsepower to the world at large by waving its antenna wildly in the wind. Mostly, it conducted its campaign by instinct. Was there a spectacular we wanted to watch? The vertical-held (whatever the hell that is!) went keefoosy. One of my kids still thinks of Mr. Martin as an elongated eel on a popo stick.

My wife and I are Jack Benny fans, so, every other Sunday night at 7:30, we watched the battle of the horizontal and vertical lines. Once Patrice Murrell was scheduled to sing some selections from a favorite opera. That's the night the audio gave up the ghost.

Then the day came when the set took the gaspsie (if you'll pardon me for mixing my metaphors). The World Series was on. The score was tied and the bases were loaded. Just as Mickey Mantle came to bat, the picture tube blew and static took over the sound system.

I called the repairman and there intruded one of those Machiavellian mechanistic trucks which sometimes make me admire gadgets almost as much as I hate them. The repairman inserted his screwdriver into the opened-up intestines of the TV set and several things happened at once. There was a loud electric crackle. A geyser of smoke shot into the room from the ailing monster. And there was a heart-warming explosion.

When I crawled out of my foxhole, I found the repairman lying unconscious on the floor, still breathing, but having the complexion of an over-ripe lemon. I wasted little sympathy on him, traitor that he was. They are all quaking, these repairmen, giving aid and comfort to the enemy. I often wonder if their tremendous, but ill-gotten, gains can ever really bring them happiness.

But they are only the evil jacksals of Mechano-dom. The real culprits are those who created the gadgets in the first place.

Just think, once the world was a raw, simple, uncomplicated place where a man could club his woman over the head in peace and tran-

quility. When he was hungry, he plucked an apple or slew a small rodent with a large rock. (And if you think rodents aren't tasty, compare them with some of the instant muck which is a by-product of mechanization.) When he was sleepy, he climbed a tree and went to sleep without worrying about whether his oil furnace was going to blow him to kingdom-come in the middle of the night. When he wanted to bathe (which wasn't too often), he simply plunged into the nearest stream and never did he know the agony of modern man scolded by a perversal stall shower.

It was Paradise all right, but then along came a jerk with an outside brain and no foresight and ruined it all. This Paleolithic Einstein had to go and invent the wheel!

From the first it was a device which could think for itself and the foundation for the battles of today were laid by that early, crude Mechano. Once-happy cave-men bumped about with crushed toes. Their wives (I sometimes suspect the entire female part of the race of being in cahoots with the gargoyle) found in the wheel an excuse for their husbands to haul their washing to the stream. It was too heavy for them to pull, they claimed. And soon the husbands were pulling wheel-carts with wifey and all the beasts inside it. Also, the wheel was the first implement of organized warfare. In those days men fought with clubs and stones and a wheel-cart could carry enough to supply a whole aggressive tribe.

From the wheel has sprung every mechanical device known to man. And through the ages the battle of Man vs. Mechano has been waged. Who knows how many Greek warriors fell victim to the loose-sprung crudeness of the early cranes? Who knows how many knights of old were tossed into moats by bucking drawbridges, sinking heavy-armed from sight and leaving naught but their last bubble to attest their fate? Who knows how many mistakes befell our Colonial soldiers and blew off their heads?

But those early days were as nothing to the all-out war which started with industrialization. Suddenly people were confronted by sewing machines (and how many of those early operators stitched their fingers really together), printing presses (oh, the bits of typesetters' flesh mixed into the molten type), steam engines—

"Ooey Gooey was a scorn—

"Cross the railroad tracks

"He'd squirm—

"Ooey Gooey!"

—was a children's poem more applicable to people than worms), steamboats (and poison gas enveloped the settlers on the riverbanks) and cotton gins (which put many a mangled Massie in de col', col' ground).

In the field of communications, the telegraph (how many people have died of heart attacks, unopened telegrams wishing them a happy St. Swithin's Day clutched in their sweaty hands?) was followed by the Atlantic cable (which just recently got its revenge for a hundred years of serving as a comfort station for fish by foaling the rudder of a transatlantic liner and damn near sinking it). This in turn was followed by the telephone (even in the early days, people could never decide which was the greater annoyance, when it did ring, or when it didn't), which brings us up to the present of radio (is there any relationship between the incidence of epilepsy and the preponderance of commercials?) and television (aids to you, too, Mr. DeForest).

In the development of conveyances, speed was the factor concentrated upon. The steam engine was to a large extent replaced by the electric daniel (Ooey Gooey at 80 mph barely left a stain). Diesel power also replaced the coal furnaces on boats and many an iceberg was safe on the high seas.

Dobbin was stabbed in favor of the horribles carnage and Mechano-dom had its most potent warrior. The organs of pedestrians were strewn like wildflowers across the highways and byways of mankind. The screech of brakes and the crash of autos became as much a part of Baby's lullaby as the cricket chirping outside his nursery window. And—fighting fire with fire—the hearing aid was developed to relieve the horn-deadened dwellers of the metropolitan areas.

But there is one large segment of mankind that was more at the mercy of the cars than any other: the drivers. Inadvertently the vehicles set out to destroy their so-called masters' sanity. With grinding gears, clogged valves, faulty pistons, explosive tires and leaky brake cylinders they bawl—and are building —neurones upon neurones, implanted extreme feelings of inferiority and replaced the Oedipal with the gas-eatable complex.

When they began sprouting the fungus of gadgets on their shiny stenors (like leeches living off a leech), the cars really insured the eventual and total madness of their owners. The floor shift (sometimes an aid to collegiate seduction) gave way to the wheel shift (when the hand on the end of the arm around the seat's neck grabbed for third speed, she was in dire danger of

lies in underground caves. Kind of like full circle.

But the Russians shouldn't scare us as much as the machines. As I said before, the doobies are consciously waging war on us all the time. And lately they've come up with a lulu of a weapon, the mechanical brain. Urrrrrr and it's brotters not only think—they think faster, more directly and far deeper than the smartest man among us. Now of course problems are being fed into these brains all the time by men, but has anybody stopped to think of what they're scheming in their leisure time? I have a theory that they're busy finding a way to overcome the one advantage man

has managed to hold over machines—the power of reproduction.

They've always been dependent on man to give them life. But once they solve the problem for themselves, they can dispense with us altogether. Perhaps they'll keep groups of us around like herds of cattle to serve their needs or as occasional hors d'oeuvres when their diet of lubricating oil begins to pall.

When that day comes, man will have no choice but to go back to nature. And the pushbutton people eaters will have put him there!



HANDBOOK FOR PRACTICAL JOKERS

(Continued from page 42)

summer with the air conditioning system going full-blast, he panned large, pulsating chunks of hamburger cheese at the main ventilators.

Another fellow who felt he was fired unjustly from a printing plant took his revenge by anonymously tipping off the Treasury Department and the local police that the business was a front for the printing of counterfeit money. The owner of the place and his other employees were grilled for weeks before the investigators were satisfied that the charge was spurious.

The practical joke prompted by revenge isn't limited to the business world. Often it's a means of combating a social snub. A good example is the string of gags pulled by the fellow whose room was out of joint because he hadn't been invited to a party. He got on the phone and by the time he got off, the party was being invaded by a stream of cops answering complaints, plumbers responding to emergency calls, drivers of tow trucks wanting to know where the wreck was, delivery boys with COD orders from local delicatessens, liquor stores and florists and a Salvation Army band who had been promised a generous contribution if they'd sing "Rock of Ages" for the revelers. The climax came when four fire companies answered a series of false alarms.

This last could have gotten the jokerster in serious trouble. Most practical jokes—even those bent on revenge—are usually careful to keep within the law. And sometimes it's easy to see where the joke is quite justified.

Take the case of a fellow who had a run-in with the changemaker at the Rockaway branch of the New York subway system. It is necessary upon leaving this station to deposit a 15 cent token in the turnstile. This is in addition to the token that has been deposited by the passenger at whatever station he entered.

This transit rider knew all this and upon finding himself ready to embark with one token and a ten-dollar bill in his pocket, he went to three or four candy stores to try to break the bill. He couldn't change it and it was getting late, so he boarded the subway with his token, figuring he'd have to change the bill on the Rockaway end.

When, after alighting, he produced it, the changemaker got very nasty about being expected to change a ten-spot. Finally he did change it, maliciously giving the man one 15 cent token and \$6.65 in nickels. Steaming, the passenger swept them into a paper bag and left.

But the more he thought about it, the madder he got. The next night he went up to the changemaker's booth and dumped the nickels in front of him. He added five pennies. "Give me 66 tokens," he said casually. Bound by law, the changemaker had to comply.

The next night the fellow dropped the 66 tokens in front of the changemaker. "I want to redeem these," he said. Again the changemaker had to comply—but this time he gave the man his money in bills and silver, for there was nothing to prevent him from repeating the whole gag.

If you think this fellow went to lengths for revenge, consider the suburbanite who set out to get even with a neighbor who was a constant borrower. This fellow spent hours in his home workshop constructing a lawnmower which would attract the eye of the neighbor. Sure enough, a few days after it was completed, the neighbor asked to borrow it. But no sooner had he pushed it onto his lawn than the carefully gummed lawnmower fell apart in hundreds of tiny pieces. That cured him of borrowing.

Not all practical jokes require so much painstaking effort. Many are conceived and executed on the spur of the moment, dictated by circum-

stance, as it were. Often the best of them happen that way.

Take the time Hollywood writer Charlie Ledner was lunching at an expensive restaurant with a socially prominent woman who had a fixation on the rights of women. He listened to her flaying the dead horse of suffragette-ism politely and didn't comment when she declared that the world would be much better off if things were run by women. But after finishing his coffee, Charlie rose, looked the woman straight in the eye and said, "Here, Madam, you wear these." And he handed her his trousers, which he had removed under cover of the table, and stalked out of the restaurant in his underwear.

The boldness of the gesture was typical of Charlie, long known as one of the most non-conforming of Hollywood's rebels. Another who had this reputation in his screen-writing days was Ben Hecht. And when he set out to pull a gag, the famed playwright-novelist was as bold—if not bolder—as Charlie.

Thus when Ben encountered a film-mission attendant with an impeccable British accent, he concocted one of the greatest hoaxes filmed has ever known. He passed the gas-pump joke off as a high-class British novelist who just might let himself be persuaded to write for the movies. MGM gobbled him up at a salary of \$5,000 per week and counted themselves lucky to have stolen this prestige-loaded prize from under the nose of their competitors.

Conched by Hecht, the "author" never ceased to impress the movie moguls with his cultured voice, well-bred diction and British culture. Called in on story conferences, he contributed derogatory grants in place of ideas and maintained the illusion that he was above it all. He never put a word on paper, but for over a year he continued the farce, collecting his five Gs each week. When MGM finally let him go, it was with regret that the movie medium was so far beneath his high-drawn talents.

It was a practical joke on a grand scale and it was perhaps unmatched for many years — until a fellow named Jess Shepherd came along. Shepherd, an iconoclastic fellow who broadens locally in New York City, singlehandedly started the "I, Libertease" prank which snowballed into national prominence and drove book store proprietors wild.

Shepherd exhorted his exceptionally faithful listening audience to run out and buy a copy of a book called, "I, Libertease" and to persuade their friends to do likewise. Soon booksellers were being swamped with requests for the non-existent novel. At first they told those

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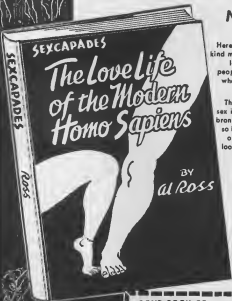
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THE IMPERFECT TRIANGLE

(Continued from page 13)

"Harry?" There was amazement in Joanne's voice.

"Yes, Harry."

"Oh, come on now, Amy. You must be exaggerating."

"I'm not exaggerating. We've been married for three years. For the first two and a half, Harry was everything a woman could want. He was considerate. He was passionate. And he was never overbearing. But for the last six months Harry's been less and less romantic. And for the last few weeks, I've been the aggressor, and he hasn't been able to do anything about it."

"Has he seen a doctor?"

"Yes. There's nothing physically wrong with him. It's all mental." Amy's voice quavered. "He just doesn't want me any more. I—I guess he's just stopped loving me."

"Oh, don't be silly, Amy. Of course he loves you."

"If he does, then he's bored with me. And that's almost as bad."

"Well, work out Amy. It's just a phase he's going through. He'll straighten himself out. Harry's too much of a man to pass up love."

"Maybe he won't pass it up," said Amy bitterly. "Maybe he'll find somebody else."

"Do you think he has?"

"Not yet. But sooner or later he might be looking for someone else."

Silently Joanne agreed with her. Harry could be that kind of man. He drove her healthy and strong and he wasn't enough of an idealist to ignore a romantic situation out of fidelity to his wife.

Joanne thought about it as she drove home. Harry impatient! It was ridiculous! He really was probably just growing tired of Amy. What he needed was a real woman. That would fix him up in the long run. It would be good for Amy, too.

Harry was one of the handsomest men Joanne had ever known. He could look at her in a way that made a blush creep up her shoulders and along her neck. There had been times when she'd envied Amy. But she didn't envy her now. Yes, the girl who made Harry snap out of that would be doing Amy a favor.

It was about a week later that Joanne's voice startled Harry's ear through the receiver of his office telephone. "Hi, darling," she said, "I had to come into town and I thought the busy executive might buy a poor old witch some lunch."

"Check your broomstick at Alfred's and have a cocktail. I'll meet you there in about twenty minutes."

"It'll be waiting, light o' my life."

Harry came into the dimly lit restaurant and peered through the smoky fog at Joanne. She was sitting

at a corner table and as he walked towards her, Harry's mind registered for the umpteenth time that she was a most desirable woman. His brain conjured up a brief image of that long ago time when they'd been going together. She hadn't changed.

"Hi, Prince Charming," Joanne greeted him and held up her cheek to be kissed.

He brushed her with his lips and sat down. "Well, Snow White, to what do I owe the honor? I haven't seen you in so long I was beginning to feel like the eighth dwarf—the one they keep hidden in the cellar."

"I've seen Amy."

"Yeah, so I hear. But that doesn't do lecherous old me any good."

"Well, she's been keeping me up to date on lecherous old you."

"If you want to be up to date, why not get your data first-hand?"

"That's why I'm here, Grumpy."

"I'm flattered."

"Oh, I make it a point to keep up on all my old beans. I want to be around when you develop the pot-belly and the receding hairline so I can feel superior."

"Will you listen to the old hag!"

"I'll 'old hag' you! I'll have you know I've kept my figure nicely."

"Never fear, I've noticed." Harry shot her a gleamish leer. "Let's see if I can feed you something nice and fattening so you'll begin looking your age." He turned his attention to the menu.

They ate slowly and with more brittle conversation. While they were lingering over their coffee, Joanne grew more serious and when she spoke her voice was no longer light.

"Harry, do you ever remember back? I mean, do you ever think about you and me?"

Harry's look was piercing. "Very often, Joanne," he answered quietly.

"You know, there was a time when I thought we might get married," said Joanne reflectively.

"We would have been miserable. I've never regretted marrying Amy."

"I know that. I wasn't implying that you had. It's just that, well, physically, we were really attracted to each other—at least I was to you."

Harry felt a strange stirring in him. "Me too. Was and am." He stopped to read Joanne's reaction in her eyes. When he continued his voice was slow and halting. "I've often toyed with the idea of suggesting that we have an affair."

"What stopped you?"

"I guess I was afraid, afraid you'd say no, afraid you'd laugh at me, afraid maybe you'd tell Amy."

"I'd never laugh at you. And I'd certainly never tell Amy."

"But you would have said no!"
 "That's something I'd only answer when and if the situation came up."

The thought of his recent problem flashed through Harry's mind again. This might be just the thing to get him over it. "Consider that it has come up," he answered Joanne deliberately.

Joanne looked at him long and hard. "Are you sure?" she asked finally.

"I'm sure."

"Then the answer is yes."

He took her hand and it was warm and eager. He leaned across the table and kissed her on the lips. Her mouth clung to his.

"Very soon," she said when they broke apart.

"Immediately," he answered and called for the bill.

The hotel was just a block away—a hotel where Harry knew the manager. It was minutes later that they were alone together in the room. Harry held his arms out to Joanne. She came willingly.

It was a little later Joanne was putting her cuffure into place. Harry was sitting on the edge of a big chair, his shoulders slumped in despair. Joanne touched him gently and looked up.

"Don't feel badly," she said. "It's just one of those things."

"Sure," he said. "Just one of those things. A big, strapping, virile guy like me who's had a yen for you ever since we were kids. What happens? I'm impotent. That's what happens. I'm impotent. That's what I have to live with. But don't feel sorry for me, or even for yourself. Feel sorry for Amy!"

"I do," said Joanne. She squeezed his shoulder, turned on her heel and left.

It was almost two weeks later and Joanne and Amy were once again having coffee in Amy's kitchen. It was their first meeting since Amy had told Joanne of Harry's impotence.

"You're looking very well, Amy," Joanne told her.

"I feel just wonderful." She stretched luxuriously.

"My goodness," Joanne laughed.

Amy grinned at her. "I could just pass. You remember what I told you about the last time you were here? About Harry, I mean? Well, it's all worked out. He's my guy again—completely. Just like that. He's so eager he makes me feel like a schoolgirl. And don't I love it!" She laughed contentedly.

What do you know, thought Joanne. I did do Amy a favor after all. Damn it! I guess I'll always envy her.



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